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OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY,

In Simple Language,
FOR SCHOOLS.

BY THE REV. J. G. WOOD, M.A.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

Price One Shilling.





OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.



Daniel in the Lions' Den.

OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY

IN SIMPLE LANGUAGE,

FOR

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BY THE

REV. J. G. WOOD, M.A.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

LONDON:

BELL AND DALDY, 186 FLEET STREET.

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PREFACE.

THE following pages contain an abridgement of the historical portion of the Old Testament, beginning at the creation of the world, and ending at the building of the second temple and the restoration of the Jews to their own land. The language has been rendered as simple as is consistent with accuracy, and the order of chronology has been carefully preserved. It is hoped that this little work will serve the young student as an introduction to sacred history; and by furnishing simple outlines, which he will be able to fill in by study, will fix the events and their order more firmly on his mind than if he were obliged to search the various books of the Old Testament for the same information.

The reader will also find that the genealogy of Christ is kept in mind throughout the volume, and that attention is directed to the sacred line at all important points of the history.

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OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE CREATION.

IN the beginning God made the heavens and the earth.

And when the earth was first made it had no form. There was no land, nor any sea, and no plant could live upon the earth, nor could any living thing breathe upon it. And there was no light, for all the earth was in black darkness.

And the Spirit of God moved upon the earth, and God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And God separated the earth from the waters, and made grass, and herbs, and trees to grow upon the earth, and God called the earth Land, and the waters he called Seas. And God appointed the sun to rule the day, and the moon to rule the night, and to divide the day from the night.

And then God made fishes and all creatures that live in the waters. And after the earth had been covered with grass, and herbs, and trees, God made animals, and birds, and creeping things of every kind, and put them upon the earth, and blessed them. And God saw that all things that He had made were very good.

After God had made this world, and covered it with herbs and trees, and filled it with birds, and beasts, and creeping things, He made a man out of the dust of the earth, and breathed a spirit into him, and placed him in the Garden of Eden to take care of it and to dress it.

And God called the man Adam, and gave him everything that was on the earth, and gave him power to rule over every living thing. But in the Garden of Eden there were two trees, one was called the Tree of Life, and the other the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Now God told Adam that he might eat the fruit of every tree in the garden except that which grew on the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and told him that if he did so he would die.

When Adam had been placed in this beautiful garden, where every sweet flower grew, and every pleasant fruit ripened, and every noble tree spread its green boughs, and every bird sang its merry song, God said that it was not good for man to be alone, and that He would make a companion for him. So God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and while he slept God took one of his ribs and made it into a woman, and gave her to Adam to be his wife, and Adam called her name Eve. And all the heavens, and the earth, and all things that are in them, were made in six days, and on the seventh day God rested from His work. And God blessed the seventh day, and called it holy, because on the seventh day He rested from all His work which He had made.

So Adam and Eve lived happily together in Eden, and they were both naked, and they were not ashamed, because they knew no evil. And they needed not to work for their living, because in the Garden of Eden everything grew that they wanted.



Adam and Eve driven out of Paradise.

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CHAPTER II.

THE FALL.

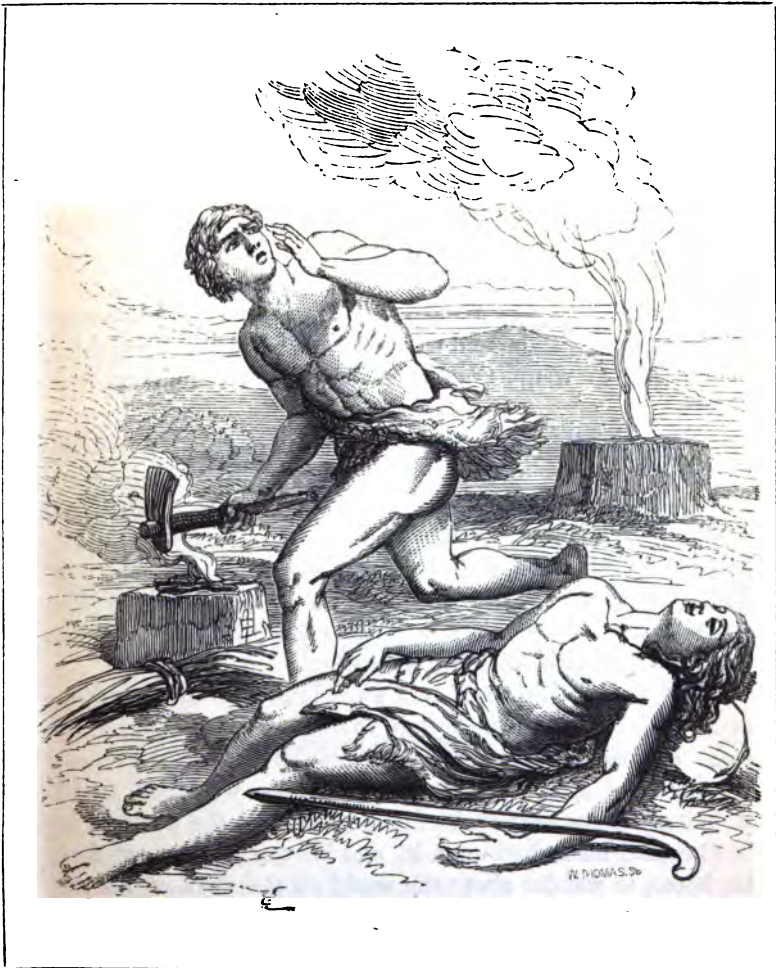
THERE is a wicked spirit called the Devil, who cannot bear to see people good, and tries to make every one as bad and as miserable as himself. So when he saw how good and happy Adam and Eve were in the beautiful garden, he took the form of a snake, and crept up to Eve while her husband was away, and told her that there was no harm in eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and that if she ate that fruit she would become very wise.

So Eve took the fruit which God had forbidden, and ate it. Then she gave the fruit to Adam, and he ate it also.

When they had eaten this fruit they knew that they had sinned, and then they were ashamed of being naked. So they gathered some fig-leaves and sewed them together, and tied them round their waists for clothes.

In those days, God used to talk to Adam and Eve ; but now when they heard His voice they tried to hide themselves among the trees. But they could not hide themselves from God, who sees everything, and He called them and asked them why they hid themselves. And they said that they were ashamed because they were naked. Then God said unto Adam, "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded that thou shouldst not eat?" And Adam laid the fault on Eve, and Eve laid the fault on the snake.

Then God punished them for their sin, and drove them out of their pleasant garden, and made them work for their living. And He told Adam and Eve that there should be



Cain and Abel.

Now Cain and Abel were not the only sons of Adam and Eve, for they had many children, both sons and daughters, and they began to increase, and they spread over the earth. In those days men lived to a very great age, more than ten times as long as at the present time; and when Adam was a hundred and thirty years old, he had a son who was called Seth, and it was of the family of Seth that Jesus Christ was born four thousand years afterwards.

After Seth was born, Adam lived for eight hundred years, and had many more sons and daughters. But their names are not mentioned in the Bible, because they do not belong to the family of Seth.

At last Adam died. He was a very old man, for he had lived nine hundred and thirty years, and he had seen many lands peopled with his sons and daughters. But there were men who lived even longer than Adam, for Jared was nine hundred and sixty-two years old when he died, and Methuselah lived for nine hundred and sixty-five years. The father of Methuselah was Enoch, who only lived in this world three hundred and sixty-five years, and then was taken to heaven because he was a good man, and loved God and kept His laws.

And Methuselah had a grandson, whose name was Noah.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ARK.

MORE than a thousand years passed away, and the world grew more and more wicked, so that God said that He would

After God had made this world, and covered it with herbs and trees, and filled it with birds, and beasts, and creeping things, He made a man out of the dust of the earth, and breathed a spirit into him, and placed him in the Garden of Eden to take care of it and to dress it.

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CHAPTER III.

CAIN AND ABEL.

IN course of time Adam and Eve had two sons, and the name of the elder was Cain, and the name of the younger was Abel. When they grew up, Cain tilled the ground, and Abel kept sheep.

Now both these brothers brought their offerings to God, as they had been taught to do, Cain brought fruit from his trees, and Abel brought lambs from his flocks. But God accepted the offering of Abel because he was good, and refused the offering of Cain because he was a bad man. So Cain grew jealous of his brother because Abel was better than himself, and because his offering was accepted; and one day he quarrelled with Abel and killed him.

And God called Cain and gave him a dreadful punishment, which would last through the whole of his life. There came a curse upon everything which he did. All who saw him avoided him. The earth which he was used to till would no longer bear fruits for him, because the blood of his brother had been shed upon it, and he was driven out from his home, to wander about the world all the days of his life. And lest any one should kill him, and so shorten his punishment, a mark was set upon him so that every one should know him, and God ordered that any one who should kill Cain should suffer a punishment seven times worse than his.

Now Cain and Abel were not the only sons of Adam and Eve, for they had many children, both sons and daughters, and they began to increase, and they spread over the earth. In those days men lived to a very great age, more than ten times as long as at the present time; and when Adam was a hundred and thirty years old, he had a son who was called Seth, and it was of the family of Seth that Jesus Christ was born four thousand years afterwards.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE ARK.

MORE than a thousand years passed away, and the world grew more and more wicked, so that God said that He would

destroy mankind from the earth for their wickedness. But God is just and merciful, and would not destroy the good with the wicked. So He spoke to Noah, who was a good man, and told him that a great flood of water would come upon the earth, and would drown every man, and beast, and bird, and creeping thing. But God taught Noah how to build a large ship, called an ark, in which he might be saved from the flood.

Noah was rather more than five hundred years old when he was first ordered to make the ark, and he was six hundred years old when it was finished, so that there was time for the wicked people to have repented of their sins and turned to God. And when the ark was finished, God told Noah to enter it, and to take with him his wife, and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet, and their wives. And lest there should be no birds or beasts upon the earth, Noah was ordered to take into the ark seven pairs of all the beasts and birds which might be eaten or used for sacrifice, and one pair of all other creatures.

And when they had all passed into the ark, the rain began to fall from the clouds, and water rose out of the earth, and for forty days and forty nights the rain fell, and the waters rose, so that even the mountains were covered, and every living thing upon the earth was drowned in the water. But when the waters came to the place where the ark had been built, they lifted it up, and it floated upon the water, and all who were in it were saved.

For five months the water remained upon the earth, and all this while the ark floated about, as the wind blew it and the waves carried it. And when the five months had passed, God stopped the rain from falling, and allowed the water to run away into the earth, and in about six weeks the flood had



Noah Leaving the Ark.

fallen so much that the ark rested upon the top of a very high mountain called Ararat.

Still no land could be seen, and after Noah had waited forty days he sent a raven out of the ark. And the raven flew backwards and forwards, but did not return to the ark. So he sent a dove from the ark, and the dove found nothing to rest upon, and she came back again to Noah.

Then Noah waited for a week, and sent out the dove again, and in the evening the dove came back again with a fresh olive leaf in her mouth, so that Noah knew that the water had sunk as low as to allow the olive-trees to be seen. Now, the olive-trees are not tall trees, so that when the tops appeared above the water, Noah knew that the flood must be nearly gone.

But he waited for another week, and sent out the dove again, and this time she did not return, because she found trees on which she could sit, and leaves which she could eat. But Noah could not go out of the ark until God had told him to do so; and although he saw that the waters had gone away, and that the earth was dry, he waited in the ark until God told him to go out.

And, after Noah and his family, and the birds, and the beasts, and the creeping things, had been shut up in the ark for more than a year, God told Noah to come out of the ark. And he came out, with all his family, and the beasts left the ark, and spread themselves over the world. And Noah took an ox, and a lamb, and a kid, and doves, and built an altar, and sacrificed them to God, and thanked Him for having saved them from the flood.

And God blessed Noah because he had obeyed His voice, and promised that He would never again send such a flood upon the earth. And God gave the rainbow as a pledge

that He would keep His word, and told Noah that whenever men saw the rainbow, they were to remember that God had promised that mankind should never again be destroyed by a flood.

Any one would have thought that those who had been saved from the flood, and had seen the waters cover the earth, would have learned to love God who had saved them, and would have done His will. But it was not so, and only a few years had passed since the world was destroyed by the flood for the wickedness of mankind, when one of the sons of Noah behaved shamefully to his father, and drew down upon himself and his children the punishment which he deserved.

When Noah left the ark, he began to till the ground, and he not only planted corn and vegetables, but took care of the fruit trees, and planted a vineyard. And, when the grapes were ripe, he made wine from their juice, and drank too much of the wine. And as he was lying in his tent, Ham, his youngest son, saw his father and mocked at him, and told his elder brothers, and tried to make them also mock their father. But they were good sons, and instead of laughing at their father, they went and helped him.

So, when Noah found what they had done, he was angry with Ham, and said that he and his children should always be servants. And he blessed his elder sons, because they had behaved well towards him, and told them that God would always be with them, because they had done well. And it was from the family of Shem, the second son, that Jesus Christ was born.

And Noah lived for three hundred and fifty years after he left the ark, so that he was nine hundred and fifty years old when he died.

For many years after Noah died all men spoke the same

language, because they were children of Noah and his sons. Now a great number of men became very proud, and forgot God, and tried to build a great tower that should reach to heaven. So they built a city, and in the city they began to build a large tower; but, while they were building, God suddenly changed their language, so that every family spoke a different language, and the builders could not understand each other, and the masters could not give their orders.

Therefore they were obliged to separate themselves; and all those who could understand each other assembled together, and went away to some place where they might live. And so it was that the different nations came on earth, and that people in different countries speak different languages.

When the builders had been driven away, the tower was called Babel, because in the Hebrew language that word means "confusion."

CHAPTER V.

ABRAHAM AND SARAH.

ABOUT ninety years after the Tower of Babel had been built, there was born, in the family of Shem, a child who was named Abram. And Abram rose to be a great and powerful man, with flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, and having many armed men under him. And he married a wife, whose name was Sarai.

And God told Abram to leave his own country, and to take with him all his family, and his flocks and his herds, and to go where God bid him. So Abram went out of the country where he had lived for seventy-five years, and where

he was so rich and so powerful, and he went into the land of Canaan.

After he had been in Canaan for some years, a great famine came upon the land, and he was obliged to go into Egypt, because there was food in that country. And, after the famine was over, Abram went back to Canaan.

Now Abram had a nephew whose name was Lot, and who was also a rich man, having great numbers of sheep and cattle. And, when they came into Canaan, Lot's shepherds quarrelled with those who took care of Abram's cattle, because they each wanted to keep the wells which had been dug to supply the cattle with water, and to take the green plains, which would supply them with food.

And when Abram found the shepherds quarrelled with each other, and that there was not enough water and herbage for all the sheep and cattle, he told Lot to go one way, and that he would go the other, so that there might be food enough for all. So Lot looked about him, and saw that towards the east there were green pastures and plenty of water. So he parted from Abram, and went away to the east, and settled in Sodom; and Abram was left to take the country on the west, where were rocks, and hills, and dry land. But God spoke to Abram, and blessed him, and promised that to his children should be given all the land which he could see from the mountains.

Then Abram moved to the plain of Mamre, and built an altar, and lived there.

Some years after Lot and Abram had parted from each other, there was a great war in the country where Lot lived, and the enemy came and took Lot prisoner, and carried him away, together with all his property. But one man escaped from the enemy, and went to Abram, and told him that Lot

was taken prisoner. So Abram took more than three hundred soldiers with him, and pursued Chedorlaomer, the king who had seized Lot. And he fought with Chedorlaomer, and drove him away, and rescued Lot and his property, and brought him back again to his house. And, as he returned, the king of Sodom came out to meet him, and with him came Melchizedek, the king of Salem and the priest of God. And Melchizedek blessed Abram, and brought him bread and wine.

Although God had promised that the children of Abram should possess the land, yet by this time Abram and his wife were both old, and they had no children. And the word of God came to Abram, and God made him look upon the stars above his head, and told him that his seed should be as numerous as the stars of heaven. And Abram believed the word of the Lord, though he did not know how it could be true; and, as was the custom in those days, Sarai, Abram's wife, gave Hagar, her maid, to Abram, so that, if Hagar should have a son, he would be counted as her own. And, in course of time, Hagar had a son, whose name was Ishmael.

And when Abram was ninety-nine years old, God spoke again to Abram, and changed his name to Abraham, and Sarai's name he changed to Sarah, and promised them again that, although they were both old, they should have a son. And at that time the Lord commanded that all the seed of Abraham should be circumcised, just as now all Christians are baptized.

And now a wonderful thing happened to Abraham; for as he was sitting at the door of his tent he saw three men standing by him; and he rose and bowed before them, and he fetched them water to wash their feet, and he killed a calf

for them, and baked bread for them, and waited on them while they ate. But Abraham did not know that God Himself had put on the form of these three men, and that while he thought that he was waiting upon three tired travellers, he was entertaining the Lord and Saviour.

Then the Lord again promised that Sarah should have a son. And Sarah could not believe the promise, for she did not know who it was that spoke, and she laughed to herself when she heard it. But the Lord, who sees and hears all things, called to her, and said that He would again return, and that she should have a son. And when this had been spoken, two of the men went towards Sodom, and the third remained with Abraham.

CHAPTER VI.

SODOM AND GOMORRAH.

AT some distance to the eastward of the place where Abraham lived, were two cities called Sodom and Gomorrah; and the people of these cities were very wicked indeed, so that the Lord said that He would destroy them and their cities for their sins. But Abraham knew that Lot lived in Sodom, and he prayed to the Lord, and begged that God would not destroy the good together with the wicked. And the Lord promised that if fifty righteous men could be found in Sodom, the city should be saved for their sake. Then Abraham prayed that God would save the city if forty righteous men should be found in it; and he went on praying until God promised that Sodom should be saved if only ten righteous men should live in the city.

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CAIN AND ABEL.

IN course of time Adam and Eve had two sons, and the name of the elder was Cain, and the name of the younger was Abel. When they grew up, Cain tilled the ground, and Abel kept sheep.

Now both these brothers brought their offerings to God, as they had been taught to do, Cain brought fruit from his trees, and Abel brought lambs from his flocks. But God accepted the offering of Abel because he was good, and refused the offering of Cain because he was a bad man. So Cain grew jealous of his brother because Abel was better than himself, and because his offering was accepted; and one day he quarrelled with Abel and killed him.

And God called Cain and gave him a dreadful punishment, which would last through the whole of his life. There came a curse upon everything which he did. All who saw him avoided him. The earth which he was used to till would no longer bear fruits for him, because the blood of his brother had been shed upon it, and he was driven out from his home, to wander about the world all the days of his life. And lest any one should kill him, and so shorten his punishment, a mark was set upon him so that every one should know him, and God ordered that any one who should kill Cain should suffer a punishment seven times worse than his.

Now Cain and Abel were not the only sons of Adam and Eve, for they had many children, both sons and daughters, and they began to increase, and they spread over the earth. In those days men lived to a very great age, more than ten times as long as at the present time; and when Adam was a hundred and thirty years old, he had a son who was called Seth, and it was of the family of Seth that Jesus Christ was born four thousand years afterwards.

After Seth was born, Adam lived for eight hundred years, and had many more sons and daughters. But their names are not mentioned in the Bible, because they do not belong to the family of Seth.

At last Adam died. He was a very old man, for he had lived nine hundred and thirty years, and he had seen many lands peopled with his sons and daughters. But there were men who lived even longer than Adam, for Jared was nine hundred and sixty-two years old when he died, and Methuselah lived for nine hundred and sixty-five years. The father of Methuselah was Enoch, who only lived in this world three hundred and sixty-five years, and then was taken to heaven because he was a good man, and loved God and kept His laws.

And Methuselah had a grandson, whose name was Noah.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ARK.

MORE than a thousand years passed away, and the world grew more and more wicked, so that God said that He would

enmity between their children and the evil spirit, but that at last the Seed of the woman should crush the serpent's head. And this came to pass when Jesus Christ came down from heaven four thousand years after Adam was driven out of Eden.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE ARK.

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Christ should be born of the family of Isaac, and that by Him all the nations of the world should be saved.

About twelve years after Abraham had laid his son upon the altar, Sarah his wife fell ill and died. After the time of Noah, people did not live to such a very great age as before the flood, and Sarah was very old, though she was only a hundred and twenty years of age when she died.

Now, Abraham did not belong to the country in which he was living, because he had left his own land at the command of God. And because he loved Sarah his wife, he did not wish to bury her in a place that belonged to other people, lest her grave should be disturbed.

And the people of the land behaved kindly to Abraham, and wished to give him a field where he might bury Sarah. But Abraham would not take the land as a gift, and so he bought from a rich man named Ephron the cave of Machpelah and the land round about it, and buried Sarah in the cave. And he appointed the cave of Machpelah to be a burial-place for himself and his family for ever.

CHAPTER VIII.

ISAAC AND REBEKAH.

Now Abraham was a very old man, and he wished that his son should take a wife before he died. So he called the oldest of his servants, named Eliezer, whom he could trust, and told him to go back to the country where he had lived, and to find a wife for him among his own people, lest Isaac should marry a wife from among the people of Canaan, where

he was living. And Abraham promised the servant that the angel of the Lord would go before him, and help him to find a wife for Isaac.

So the servant went away into the land of the Chaldeans, and took ten camels with him, because Abraham his master was very rich, and on the camels he had laid many presents for Isaac's wife.

And, when he had gone a long journey, he came to a well. And he made his camels kneel down by the side of the well, and then he prayed that God would give him a sign, by which he might find the woman whom God had chosen to be the wife of Isaac. And, as it was the custom for the maidens to come in the evening with their vessels, and bring water from the well, he prayed that God would choose from among them a wife for Isaac, and would inspire her to offer him water, so that he might know her.

And, just as he had finished his prayer, there came to the well a young maiden named Rebekah, and she gave water to Abraham's servant, and brought water to his camels. So Abraham's servant knew that she had been chosen for Isaac's wife. And when the servant came to ask her who she was, she told him that she was the daughter of Bethuel, Abraham's brother, so that she was the cousin of Isaac.

So the servant gave her the presents which he had brought, and she went away with him and became the wife of Isaac.

And now that he had done all the work that God had given him to do, and had seen the wife of his son Isaac, Abraham fell sick and died, being an hundred and seventy-five years old. And his two sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, where the body of Sarah his wife had been laid.

After Isaac and Rebekah had been long married, they

had two sons, and the name of the elder was Esau, and that of the younger was Jacob. And before they were born, God told Rebekah that the elder should serve the younger, though he was rightly the heir to his father's name and land, and cattle and money.

Now the two brothers were very different from each other. Esau was a rough, strong, daring lad, who was fond of hunting, and could not endure quiet, and lived for the most part in the fields. But still he loved his father Isaac, and used to bring him the flesh of the deer which he had shot with his arrows.

But Jacob was always gentle and quiet, and did not care for hunting, and stayed at home with his mother, who loved him more than she loved his brother Esau. And even in their looks the two brothers were different, for Esau was covered with hair, even to the ends of his fingers, while Jacob was smooth and fair.

One day, while they were both young men, they had gone to their usual tasks, Esau went into the fields to hunt, and Jacob remained at home to feed and watch the cattle. And, in the evening, Jacob had made some pottage for himself, and Esau came home, weary with hunting and faint from hunger. And when he asked Jacob to give him some of his pottage, Jacob would not do so unless Esau would give him his birthright for it. So Esau gave his birthright for the pottage, and so Jacob became the heir of his father.

And, when Esau was about forty years old, he married a wife from among the people of the land, instead of going to his own country for a wife, as his father had done. And his father and mother were grieved that he had done so.

CHAPTER IX.

JACOB'S DECEIT.

Now, Isaac began to be very old, and his eyes were dim so that he could not see. And he called Esau his eldest son, and asked him to take his bow and arrows and go into the field and kill a deer and bring him the meat, so that he might eat of it and have strength to bless him before he died. So Esau did as his father told him to do, and took his bow and arrows, and went out in the fields and began to hunt.

Now, Rebekah had heard that Isaac had promised to bless Esau when he came back from hunting, and because she loved Jacob better than Esau, she thought that she would try to obtain the blessing for Jacob. So she called Jacob and told him to fetch two kids from the flock, and to dress them like venison, and to take them to his father who could not see, and pretend to be Esau, and so obtain the promised blessing.

But Jacob said that he could not do so, because his father would feel him, and know that he was not Esau, because Esau was a hairy man and he was smooth. But Rebekah took the skins of the kids and put them on Jacob's neck and on his hands, so that they were rough and hairy like those of his brother, and she put Esau's dress upon Jacob.

And Jacob took the meat and brought it to his father, and said, "My father!" "And he said, Here am I, who art thou, my son?" And then Jacob told a lie, and said that he was Esau. And Isaac did not believe him because he knew his voice. So he called Jacob to his bed, and felt his

hands, and his neck, and his clothes, and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." And he asked again, "Art thou my very son Esau?" And Jacob said, "I am."

Then Isaac believed him, for he was blind, and could not see his son. And he blessed Jacob, thinking him to be Esau, and said; "God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine. Let people serve thee and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee; cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee."

And as soon as Isaac had finished his blessing, Jacob went away. Now he had but just left his father, when Esau came back from hunting. And he dressed the flesh of the deer which he had killed, and brought it to Isaac; and when Isaac found that he had blessed Jacob instead of Esau, he trembled, and told Esau that he had already given his blessing. And Esau wept, and prayed his father to bless him also. And then Isaac spoke again, and said to Esau, "Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fortress of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; and by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother, and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck."

CHAPTER X.

THE FLIGHT OF JACOB.

AND Esau hated his brother Jacob because he had obtained his father's blessing by deceit, and gained the birthright



Isaac Blessing Jacob.

which Esau had sold to him for the pottage when they were young men. And he was very angry with Jacob, and he proposed to kill his brother after his father had died. And Rebekah found out that Esau intended to kill Jacob, and she sent Jacob away to her brother Laban, who lived in Haran, and told him to remain with Laban until his brother's anger had ceased.

And before he went away, Isaac called him and charged him not to take a wife from the country where he lived as Esau had done, but to marry a woman from among his own people.

Then Jacob went away towards Haran. And on the way he lay down to sleep, and put a stone under his head for a pillow, and he dreamed a wonderful dream. In his dream he saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending the ladder. And above it stood the Lord, and He spoke to Jacob, and said, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac, the land whereon thou liest to thee will I give it and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west and to the east, and to the north and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again unto this land, for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken unto thee of."

And when Jacob awoke, he knew that the Lord had spoken to him, and he rose early in the morning, and took one of the stones which he had laid under his head for a pillow, and set it up, and poured oil upon it, and he called the place Bethel, that is, the house of God, because God had



Jacob's Dream.

appeared to him there. And Jacob made a vow that if he returned to his father's house in peace, he would give for God's service the tenth part of all that he had.

CHAPTER XI.

LEAH AND RACHEL.

AND Jacob went forward on his journey, and came to Haran, and there he met Rachel, his cousin, leading her father's flock to the well. And he rolled away the stone which lay upon the mouth of the well, and drew water for the flock. And Rachel ran to tell her father that Jacob had come to them, and Laban went out and brought Jacob to his house.

And Jacob loved Rachel, and he promised to serve Laban for seven years if Rachel might be his wife. And when the seven years were over Jacob asked for his wife. But Laban deceived him, and married him to her elder sister, Leah. And in the morning, Jacob found that Leah had been given to him instead of Rachel, and he was angry with Laban for deceiving him. So Laban promised to give him Rachel also, if he would serve him for seven years more—for in these days men were allowed to have more than one wife.

And after they were married, Leah had six sons, and a daughter, and then Rachel had a son, who was called Joseph. And when Jacob wished to take his wives, and his children, and his property, and return into the land of Canaan, Laban would not part with him, because he knew that God had blessed him for Jacob's sake. So, when he told Jacob to choose what wages he should have for serving him, Jacob

said that he would have the spotted and speckled cattle and goats, and the brown-woolled sheep, and that Laban should keep all the rest.

And Laban agreed to give them to Jacob for his wages. But, though at first the best were Laban's and the worst Jacob's, God blessed the flocks of Jacob, and they became more and stronger than those of Laban. And when Laban found that Jacob's flocks and herds increased more than his own, he became jealous and displeased. And the Lord spoke again to Jacob, and told him to return to his father's land.

So Jacob gathered together his family, and his servants, and his cattle, and set off on his way to his father's house.

But when he came near the house of his father, he was afraid, because of his brother Esau. And he sent messages to Esau, and prepared presents for him, and prayed to God to help him, for Esau was the leader of many soldiers.

And in the night an angel came to Jacob and wrestled with him till daybreak. But Jacob did not know that it was an angel, till the man touched his thigh, and put it out of joint. Then Jacob knew that an angel had come to him, and he asked a blessing of him. And the angel blessed him, and said that his name should be no more Jacob, but Israel, which means a prince of God.

When the angel left him, Jacob saw Esau coming with four hundred men. And he ran forward and bowed before Esau. And Esau ran to meet him and kissed him, and was friendly towards him. And then Esau went back to Seir, and Jacob proceeded onwards.

As Jacob journeyed, he came again to the place which he had called Bethel. And he remembered that when he had fallen asleep there twenty years before, and built the altar to

the Lord, he was alone and friendless, and fleeing from the anger of his brother. And now that he was a rich man, with wives and children, and flocks and herds, and many servants and much goods.

At last Jacob came to his father's house, and soon afterwards Isaac died, being then a hundred and eighty years old, and his sons, Esau and Jacob, buried him in the tomb with his father and mother.

CHAPTER XII.

THE STORY OF JOSEPH.

Now Rachel had another son, and she died as soon as he was born. And Jacob lived in the land of Canaan with his twelve sons. And he loved Joseph better than all his other sons, and they were jealous of their brother.

And Joseph dreamed that the sun and the moon and eleven stars bowed to him ; and that when his brothers and himself were reaping corn, the sheaves of his brothers bowed down to his sheaf. Then those dreams made his brothers even more angry, for they knew that by them was meant that he would be more powerful than his parents and his brothers.

So they wickedly seized Joseph, and threw him into a pit, and when some merchants came by, they sold him as a slave to them.

Now, because Jacob loved Joseph better than his other sons, he had made for him a coat of many colours. And when his brothers had sold him, they took his coat, and killed a kid, and dipped the coat in the blood, and brought



Joseph and his Brethren.

it to Jacob ; and when Jacob saw the coat all covered with blood, he thought that a wild beast had killed Joseph, and he wept bitterly, because he thought his son was dead.

And Joseph was taken by the merchants to Egypt, and they sold him to be a slave in the house of Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh the king.

And Joseph rose from being a mere slave to be set over all the house. After he had been for some years in the house, Potiphar's wife tempted Joseph to act wickedly, and because he refused, she accused him falsely to Potiphar, and he was thrown into prison.

After Joseph had been in prison for some time, Pharaoh was angry with two of his household, his chief baker and his chief butler, and he sent them to the same prison where Joseph was kept.

And when they had been in the prison for many days, each of them dreamed a strange dream, and they could not tell what might be the meaning of their visions. So Joseph asked them why they were sad, and they said that it was because they could not learn the meaning of the dreams. So Joseph said that if they would tell him what the dreams were, perhaps God would teach him their meaning. And they told their dreams to Joseph.

Now, the chief butler dreamed that he saw a vine with three branches, and that the vine put forth leaves, and flowers, and grapes, and that the grapes ripened in clusters. Then he dreamed that Pharaoh's cup was in his hand, and that he squeezed the juice of the grapes into the cup, and gave it to the king.

Then Joseph said that the three branches of the vine meant three days, and that within three days Pharaoh would

take the butler out of prison, and would restore him to his office, and take the cup from his hand.

And the dream of the chief baker was this. He dreamed that on his head he had three white baskets full of baked meats for Pharaoh, and that the birds came and ate the meats out of the baskets. Then Joseph said that the three baskets meant three days, and that on the third day he should be killed, and his body hung up, and that the birds should come and eat his flesh from him.

And when the third day came the baker was put to death, and the butler was pardoned, just as Joseph had foretold. And Joseph asked the butler to remember that he had explained the dream, and to tell Pharaoh that he was put in prison, though he had done no wrong. But, when the butler was brought out of prison and restored to his office, he forgot Joseph, and said nothing of him to Pharaoh. And for two years more Joseph was left in prison. And the keeper of the prison knew that Joseph was a good man, and he gave him the charge of the prison, and of all who were in it, for he knew that Joseph would act rightly and honestly.

Two years afterwards Pharaoh dreamed a strange dream, that seven lean and seven fat cattle rose out of the Nile, and the lean cattle devoured the fat, and also that seven thin ears of corn devoured seven full ears. And no one could tell Pharaoh the meaning of his dream.

Then the butler remembered that Joseph had foretold the meaning of his own dream, and he told Pharaoh, and Pharaoh sent for Joseph. And when Joseph heard the dream, he said that it meant that in Egypt there should be first seven years of plenty, and then seven years of famine, so great that they would eat up the corn produced in the seven

years of plenty. And he advised the king to appoint officers who should watch over the harvest of the seven years of plenty, and lay them up against the seven years of famine.

And the king knew that the spirit of God was with Joseph. And he made Joseph ruler over all the land of Egypt, and so Joseph who went into the king's palace as a prisoner and a slave, came out of it the greatest man in Egypt, next to Pharaoh himself.

And Joseph ruled very wisely over Egypt, and gathered all the harvest together, and laid them up in great store-houses during seven years. And he gathered together so much corn that it could not be reckoned. And Pharaoh was kind to Joseph, and gave him for a wife Asenath, the daughter of the priest of On, one of the gods of Egypt; and during the seven years of plenty he had two sons, and called the name of the elder Manasseh, and the younger he called Ephraim.

Now, it came to pass, after the seven years of plenty, that the seven years of famine began. And in Egypt there was corn, because Joseph had laid it up, but in the land round about there was no corn.

So, when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent his sons with money to buy corn, but Benjamin the youngest he left at home. And Joseph's brothers came before him, and bowed down before him, for he was the ruler of the land and they did not know him. So the dream came true which Joseph had dreamed many years before.

But Joseph knew his brothers, though he pretended not to believe them, and spoke roughly to them. And he advised them to fetch Benjamin, for he wanted to see his own brother, and he sent them all back except Simeon, whom he put in prison. And when he had filled their sacks with



Joseph Interpreting Pharaoh's Dream.

corn, he put their money back into the sack's mouth, and sent his brothers home.

And, when they came to the father and opened their sacks and found their money in the sacks, they were afraid, for they thought that when they went back again with Benjamin, they would be accused of having stolen the money.

After awhile, when they had eaten all the corn which they had brought from Egypt, and could find no more in Canaan, they were obliged to go again to buy corn, lest they should die of hunger. So they took double money with them as well as the money which they found in their sacks, and they brought a present for Joseph, lest he should be angry with them.

And when Joseph saw Benjamin, he asked if he were the youngest son, and whether their father was still alive. And then he ordered dinner to be set for them; and after they had dined, he told the steward to fill their sacks with corn, and to put the money again in the mouth of the sacks, and to hide his own silver cup in Benjamin's sack.

Then, after they had left the city, he sent men after them, who accused them of stealing Joseph's cup. And they denied that they had stolen it, and they took down the sacks and opened them. And every one of them found his money in the sack, and in Benjamin's sack the silver cup was found. So they all went back to Joseph, and they fell down before him and asked his mercy. And Judah begged Joseph to let Benjamin go back to their father, and to take himself instead.

Then Joseph sent all his servants and officers away, and made himself known to his brothers, and wept because they had again come to him, and because his father was alive.

And they were afraid, because they remembered that they had behaved cruelly to Joseph and had sold him for a slave.

But Joseph forgave them and comforted them, and showed them how God had turned their wickedness into good, and had saved the land from famine. And he sent them to his father, and said that if Jacob would come and live in Egypt, he and all his family should be fed during the five years of famine that were yet to come.

And when they went back to Jacob, and told him that Joseph was alive and ruled over the land of Egypt, he would not believe them, for he thought that Joseph had been killed by a wild beast. And the sons had to tell their father how wicked they had been, and how Joseph had forgiven them. And they showed Jacob the presents which he had sent to his father. And then Jacob believed them and rejoiced, and set out to see his son.

When Jacob came to Beersheba, on his way to Egypt, God spoke again to him, and told him that he might go to Egypt, and that in that country his seed would grow to be a great nation. And so Jacob went on his journey, and sent Judah to tell Joseph that he was coming. So Joseph went out to meet his father, and brought him into Egypt.

And Pharaoh was good to Jacob, because he was the father of Joseph, and gave him and his family much land, in which they might live and feed their cattle. And Jacob lived in the land of Goshen, a part of the land of Egypt, for seventeen years.

CHAPTER XIII.

JACOB'S BLESSING.

Now Jacob was a very old man, and knew that he was going to die; and he called Joseph, and told him to bring his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, that he might bless them. And he blessed them both; but he laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh, who was the elder.

And Joseph thought that his father had done so because he was blind and could not see which was the elder; and he took his father's right hand and wished to lay it upon Manasseh, because he was the elder. But Jacob said, "I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but, truly, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations."

And when he had blessed Ephraim and Manasseh, he called all his twelve sons together, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and told him what to say to his sons; and he prophesied that through Judah should come the Saviour, and he foretold that Joseph should have a double portion of the land. And so it was, that when the tribes of Israel were called after the names of Jacob's sons, there was no tribe of Joseph, but two tribes instead—one of Ephraim, and the other of Manasseh.

And, when he had finished his blessings, he charged his sons to bury him in the cave of Machpelah, where Abraham and Isaac had already been laid. And they promised that they would do so. And when they had promised, Jacob

died ; and he was one hundred and forty-seven years old when he died.

Then Joseph embalmed the body of his father, as was the custom of the Egyptians, and he mourned for his father forty days.

And when the forty days had ended, Joseph took the body of his father, and his brothers, and a great company of chariots and horsemen, went with him. And they carried the body of Jacob into the land of Canaan, and laid it in the cave of Machpelah, as they had promised.

And Joseph lived in Egypt for fifty-four years, ruling the land wisely, and increasing the wealth and the power of the king ; and he behaved kindly to his brothers, and he lived to see his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. And when he died he told his brothers that God would bring them out of Egypt into the land which he promised to Abraham, and ordered them to carry his body with them, and to bury it in that land.

So he died ; and his body was laid in a stone coffin, after the manner of the Egyptians, where it lay until the children of Israel were brought out of Egypt, and then it was buried by the tribe of Ephraim, his son, in Shechem.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BIRTH AND CALL OF MOSES.

ACCORDING to the promise of God the children of Israel increased greatly. And there was a new king in Egypt, who knew not Joseph ; and when he saw that the children of Israel were very many, he made them into slaves, and set

masters over them, and made them work in the fields. Now all the kings of Egypt were called Pharaoh, and this Pharaoh was a bad man, and he told the nurses to kill all the male children as soon as they were born.

And there was a woman named Jochabed, who had a son, and because she was afraid lest Pharaoh should order him to be killed, she hid him for three months. And when she could hide him no longer, she put him into a little ark made of bulrushes, and placed it in the river Nile, and set her daughter Miriam to watch it.

Presently the daughter of Pharaoh came to bathe, and she saw the child, and sent her servant to fetch it, and she was kind to it. And then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter if she might fetch a nurse for the child, and she went and fetched his own mother.

And Pharaoh's daughter said that the child should be her son, and she called his name Moses ; and the child grew, and was taught all the learning of the Egyptians. But Moses loved his parents and his own people ; and one day, when he was grown up to be a man, he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, and Moses helped the Hebrew and killed the Egyptian.

Now when Pharaoh heard that Moses had killed an Egyptian, he tried to kill Moses ; but Moses fled into Midian, and went to Jethro the priest, and lived in the land of Midian until he was about eighty years old.

Now, as Moses was keeping the flocks of Jethro, he led them into the desert near Mount Horeb ; and suddenly the Lord appeared to Moses like a great flame burning in a bush, and yet the bush was not burned. At first Moses did not know that the Lord was in the flame, and he turned aside to see that wonderful sight.



Moses in the Bulrushes.

And the Lord called to him out of the bush, and told him to take his shoes from off his feet, because it was holy ground; and said, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And God said that He would save the children of Israel, and would take them out of Egypt, and bring them into the pleasant land which He had promised to Abraham. And God said that Moses should be their leader, and should bring the children of Israel into the promised land.

Now Moses could not believe this saying, for he thought that the people would not obey him. So God told him to throw his staff upon the ground, and when it had touched the ground it became a serpent, and Moses fled from it. And God told him to take it up, and as soon as he had taken it into his hand, it became a staff again.

And again God told Moses to put his hand into his bosom, and when he took it out it was leprous, as white as snow. Then God told him to put it again into his bosom, and when he took it out it was healed again. And God told Moses that he would give such signs through him, that all the people should believe. And he appointed Aaron, the brother of Moses, to assist him, and to speak the words which Moses should put into his mouth.

CHAPTER XV.

THE TEN PLAGUES.

AND now the time had come when the Lord told Moses to go again into Egypt. So Moses went into Egypt, and assem-

bled the children of Israel, and told them the commands of God, and they believed him.

Now Pharaoh treated the children of Israel very cruelly, and forced them to make bricks. And Moses and Aaron asked Pharaoh to allow them to go for three days into the desert, to sacrifice to the Lord. But Pharaoh refused, and would not give the people straw for their bricks, and ordered them to make as many bricks as when the straw was given to them. And when they would not do so, they were beaten with whips.

Then Moses and Aaron prayed to the Lord to help them. And God told them to go to Pharaoh, and to ask him to send the children of Israel out of Egypt. And Pharaoh refused, and Moses then threw down his staff before Pharaoh, and it became a serpent. And Pharaoh sent for his wise men, and they threw down their rods and pretended to change them into serpents; but Moses's rod swallowed up theirs. And yet Pharaoh would not let the people go.

Next morning, God told Moses to go to Pharaoh and ask him again. And Pharaoh refused again. So Moses lifted up his staff and smote the river, and its waters were turned to blood, and so was every well, and every pond, and every stream, and every pool through all the land of Egypt. And the water became corrupt, and the fishes died, and there was great misery throughout Egypt for want of water. But Pharaoh sent again for the wise men, and they pretended to turn water into blood; and Pharaoh would not let the people go.

Again God spoke to Moses and Aaron, and they went to Pharaoh and asked him to let the people go. And he would not. And Moses told Aaron to stretch out his staff over the rivers, and the ponds, and the streams. And Aaron did so.

And frogs came up out of the water, and they covered the land, and they filled the houses, and crawled into the beds of the owners, and even into the king's palace. But Pharaoh's wise men pretended to bring frogs out of the water.

And Pharaoh begged Moses and Aaron to take them away; and they said that if Pharaoh would promise to let the people go, the frogs should be removed. And Pharaoh promised; and Moses and Aaron prayed to God, and the frogs all died, and the people gathered their dead bodies into heaps. But even then Pharaoh would not keep his promise, and he refused to let the people go.

So God spoke again to Moses, and ordered him to tell Aaron to stretch out his rod, and strike the dust of the earth. And Aaron did so, and the dust was changed into lice, and the lice swarmed on every man throughout the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh's wise men went to him, and said, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hard, and he would not let the people go.

Again God spake to Moses; and sent a grievous plague of flies upon Egypt, and the flies came into all the houses of the Egyptians, but into the houses of the children of Israel they did not come.

And Pharaoh promised that if the flies were taken away, he would allow the children of Israel to go three days' journey into the desert, and offer sacrifice. But when Moses and Aaron prayed, and the flies were taken away, he would not keep his promise.

Next there came a very terrible plague, for a murrain came on all the cattle of the Egyptians, but those of the children of Israel escaped. But even then Pharaoh would not let the people go.

So God sent boils upon Pharaoh and all the Egyptians;

and because Pharaoh's heart was hard, there came a very fearful rain, with hail, and thunder, and lightning. And the hail beat down all the crops, and killed every living thing that was in the open air, and the lightning ran along upon the ground. But, in the part of the land where the children of Israel lived, there was no hail, nor rain, nor thunder, nor lightning.

And Pharaoh was afraid, and sent for Moses and Aaron, and asked them to stop the hail and the fire, and promised again to let the people go. But his heart was very hard, and when the storms had ceased, he again broke his promise.

Then God sent another plague upon Egypt, and brought locusts into the land. And the locusts ate all the green herbs that had not been destroyed by the hail, and they ate all the leaves and tender branches of the trees.

And again Pharaoh promised to let the children of Israel go, and again he broke his promise.

And then God sent another plague. For a thick darkness came over Egypt, and for three days no one could move from his house. And Pharaoh again sent for Moses and Aaron, and when they told him that they must take their flocks and their herds into the desert, he was very angry, and ordered them never to appear before him again, for fear of death. So Moses and Aaron went from the presence of Pharaoh, and they never saw him again.

Then God told Moses that he was about to bring a fearful plague among the Egyptians, and that all the first-born should die, because Pharaoh would not let the people go.

And God said that He would send His destroying angel, who should pass over the land, and should kill every first-born in the country, the first-born of men, and of oxen, and sheep, and goats. But, lest the angel should destroy those

that feared the Lord, God appointed a sign, and ordered the people to take a lamb or a kid, and to offer it as a sacrifice, and to strike the blood upon the side-posts, and the lintels of their doors; and to roast and eat the flesh in haste, with their loins girded, and their staff in their hands, as if going upon a journey. And they were told to eat no leavened bread with it. And God promised that when the angel was sent to the Egyptians, he would pass over those houses which had the blood of the lamb upon the door. And, therefore, that feast was called the Passover, and God ordered the Israelites to keep the Passover every year after they had been brought out of Egypt.

And the Israelites did as they had been commanded. And the angel of the Lord went through the land of Egypt, and all the first-born died, the first-born of Pharaoh, and of all the people, and of the cattle; there was not a house where there was not one dead.

And Pharaoh rose up in the night, and sent to Moses and Aaron, and told them to take the people with them and to go out of Egypt at once. And all the Egyptians urged them to go, for they feared lest they also should be destroyed.

And the Israelites asked the Egyptians for their clothes, and their jewels, and their gold, and their silver. And the Egyptians gave them to the Israelites, to encourage them to go out of the land. And so the Israelites went out of Egypt, and because they were in haste they could not leaven their bread, but they tied up their leathern kneading-troughs in their clothes, and carried the unleavened dough with them.

When they first came to Egypt with Jacob, they were only seventy men, women, and children, and when they went out of Egypt, four hundred and thirty years afterwards, they were six hundred thousand grown people, besides children.

And they took much cattle with them, and the Egyptians had given them their jewels and their gold, so that they became at once a great and a rich nation.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE RED SEA.

So God kept His promise to the Israelites, and led them out of Egypt by the hand of Moses. And God appointed the way by which they should go, and He set a pillar of cloud to lead them by day, and a pillar of fire to lead them by night. And the pillar went towards the Red Sea.

Now, Pharaoh was angry because he had let the people go, and he thought that he would take them back again, because they had gone towards the sea and would not be able to pass it. So, he took his chariots and his soldiers, and his horsemen, and went in pursuit of the Israelites.

And just as the Israelites had reached the shore of the Red Sea, they saw the army of Pharaoh coming after them. and they were afraid, and cried to Moses. And the Lord spoke to Moses, and told him to stretch out his hand over the sea. And Moses did so, and the sea divided itself, and the Israelites walked through the bed of the sea and passed to the other side, and as they walked, the water stood like a wall on each side of them.

Now, when they had nearly all passed over the sea, Pharaoh and his army came up, and they pursued after the Israelites, and also went into the bed of the sea. And the people were afraid. Then God spoke again to Moses, and

told him to stretch out his rod again over the sea. And he did so, and the sea rolled back again into its bed, and covered Pharaoh and his army, and they were all drowned. And in the morning the Egyptians were lying dead upon the shore, but all the Israelites were in safety. And the Israelites saw the great work which God had done, and they feared the Lord and believed Moses.

And then Moses and all the elders of Israel sang a song of praise to the Lord, because he had brought them out of Egypt, and led them through the midst of the sea on dry land, and had saved them from their enemies.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ISRAELITES FED BY GOD.

THEN the pillar of cloud moved on, and led the people into the wilderness, where they could find no water. But after three days they came to a place called Marah, where there was water, but it was so bitter that they could not drink it. And the people murmured against Moses. And Moses prayed to God, and God showed him a tree, and told him to throw a branch of the tree into the water; and when he had done so, the water became sweet.

Again they were led into the desert, and they could find nothing to eat. And again they murmured against Moses for leading them into the desert, although it was not Moses that led them, but the pillar of cloud and fire that went before them. And again Moses prayed, and that evening God sent great flocks of quails, which covered the camp, and



The Overthrow of Pharaoh's Host.

in the morning He sent bread from heaven. For as soon as the dew had gone up there lay upon the ground little white things like coriander seed, and the Israelites went and gathered it. And there was just enough for all the Israelites; and if any man gathered more than he wanted, it became putrid and had worms and stank. And as soon as the sun became hot, it melted away. And the Israelites called it manna, because they did not know what it was.

But on the sixth day, double the quantity of manna fell, and each man gathered twice as much as on other days. For no manna fell on the seventh day because it was the sabbath day, and if any one did not gather enough on the sixth day, he had none on the seventh. And the taste of the manna was sweet, as if it had been made with honey. And God ordered that one pot of the manna should be gathered and kept before the Lord as a memorial that He had fed the people with bread from heaven. And although this manna was kept for many years, it did not corrupt, nor breed worms.

Then the Israelites went onward, and again they found no water, and again they murmured against Moses. But Moses prayed to God to help them, and God told Moses to take a rod, and strike a great rock that was at the place, and he did so, and water gushed out of the rock, and all the people drank.

After this the Amalekites came and fought against Israel. And Moses went to the top of the hill to pray for them. And whenever Moses held up his hands to pray, Israel conquered, and whenever he let them fall the Amalekites conquered. So Moses sat down upon a great stone, and Aaron and Hur came, one on each side of him, and held

up his hands until the evening, so that the Amalekites fled away. And Moses built an altar to God because He had helped Israel.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

WHEN God led the people to Mount Sinai, He ordered that they should sanctify themselves and come to the mountain. But no one might ascend the mountain, or even lay his hand upon it ; and bounds were set round the mountain lest any one should touch it.

And on the third day, a thick cloud fell upon the mountain, and out of the cloud came thunders and lightnings, and the sound of a trumpet that rang louder and louder, and all the people were afraid. And when the cloud had covered the mountain, and Sinai shook as if with an earthquake, and the trumpet sounded still louder, Moses spoke to the Lord. And the Lord answered Moses out of the cloud, and told him to come up into the mountain: and Moses went away from the people into the darkness.

And then God gave Moses the ten commandments. And God spake these words, and said :—

I. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

II. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third

and fourth generation of them that hate me ; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain : for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain.

IV. Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work ; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day ; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.

V. Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI. Thou shalt not kill.

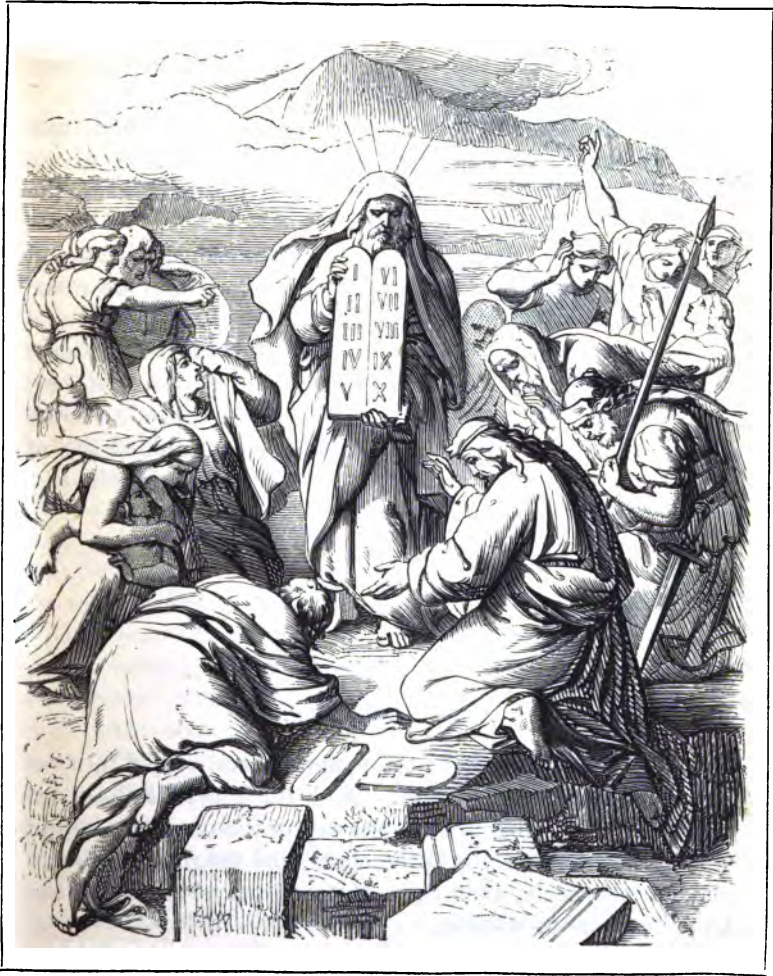
VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

And when the people saw the mountain covered with smoke, and the lightnings flashing on every side, and heard the thunder and the sound of the trumpet, they were afraid, and went away from the mountain and stood far off. And they asked Moses to speak to them, for they were afraid to



The Tables of Stone.

hear the voice of the Lord. And Moses told them to fear God, and that then they need not be afraid of Him, and would not be led into sin.

And then Moses went again into the dark cloud, and the Lord taught him the laws which he was to give to the children of Israel, and ordered that they should keep the feast of the Passover every year.

Then God ordered Aaron, with his two sons, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the chief men, to worship near the mountain, and took Moses again into the cloud alone. So Moses went to the people, and he read to them the promises which God had made, and built an altar to the Lord, and set up twelve pillars, one for each tribe, and sacrificed to God. And he took the blood of the sacrifice, and sprinkled half of it upon the altar, and the other half upon the people, and that blood was the seal of the covenant.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE TABERNACLE.

THEN Moses went again to the mountain and passed into the cloud as God had told him. And the glory of the Lord shone like a burning fire on the top of the mountain—and God spoke to Moses out of the cloud, and taught him how to make a tabernacle, that is, a place of prayer, in which the Israelites were to worship.

Now the tabernacle was to be made so that it could be taken to pieces, and moved about from place to place, for God knew that the Israelites would wander about for many

years before they came to the land which had been promised to them.

So its walls could not be built of stone or brick, but were made of wooden posts and boards, which were planted in sockets and held together by rings and long bars. And its roof could not be made hard, and solid, and flat, like the tops of houses in the East, but was made of four coverings; the first covering, which was the ceiling to those who were inside the tabernacle, was fine white linen, with figures of cherubim in scarlet and blue and purple. The next covering was made of goat's hair, the next of sheepskins dyed red, and the outermost was made of badger's skins, so as to throw off the rain and keep out the sand. All these coverings were held in their places by loops and cords.

And, because it was the house of God, it was made of hard and beautiful wood, and all the boards were covered with gold, and the sockets were made of silver, so that it was very beautiful; and the gold and silver that were used for the tabernacle were taken from the Egyptians. And the inside of the tabernacle was divided into two parts, by a beautiful veil or curtain: the first was called the Holy Place, and the second the Most Holy Place, or the Holy of Holies. And there were no windows in the tabernacle, but there was a seven-branched candlestick to give light in the Holy place, and in the Most Holy place there was no need of light, for the glory of the Lord always shone there.

And round the tabernacle were set posts of brass, hung with curtains, so as to make a court round it. And in the court of the tabernacle was placed an altar, on which were laid the burnt sacrifices, and a great brass basin in which the priests washed themselves before offering sacrifice. And in the Holy place there was a candlestick with seven branches,

all made of gold, and a table on which was placed some bread, in order to show that God feeds His people, and a small altar on which incense was burnt.

And in the Most Holy place there was nothing but the Ark.

Now the Ark was a kind of large chest made of wood and covered with gold. And upon the Ark were placed two cherubims, with their wings meeting over the ark, and the place between the wings was called the Mercy-seat, and it was from the Mercy-seat that the glory of the Lord always shone.

CHAPTER XX.

APPOINTMENT OF THE PRIESTS.

Now, when God had told Moses of the tabernacle, he ordered him to appoint priests for the daily service. And God ordered that Aaron should be the high-priest, and that all his sons and all the males of his family should be the priests. And beautiful robes were ordered for the high-priest, made of pure white linen, and scarlet and purple, and blue and gold. And round the hem of the garment were golden bells and pomegranates, and on the breast of the high-priest there was a breastplate made of twelve precious stones, one for each tribe, and upon his head there was a white linen mitre, with a plate of gold upon it, and the words "Holiness to the Lord" were written upon the plate.

And for the priests were ordered white linen robes, and linen caps, and beautiful girdles upon their waists.

Then Moses was told to take Aaron and his sons and clothe them in the garments of their priesthood, and to pray

for them, and to offer a sacrifice and sanctify them with the blood of the sacrifice, and sprinkle them with pure oil. And after they were appointed, they were ordered to offer the daily sacrifice, and to burn incense before the Lord.

And the incense which was burnt in the tabernacle was very sweet, and no one was allowed to make that incense for any other purpose. And the oil which was used for anointing the priests was holy oil, made of olives, and myrrh, and cinnamon, and calamus, and cassia; and this was holy oil, which might not be used except for the priests.

And the priests were allowed to go into the Holy place, but only the high-priest might pass through the veil and go into the Holy of holies where the ark stood, and the glory of the Lord shone from the Mercy-seat. The priests were also ordered to explain the law to the people. There was only one high-priest, and when he died his eldest son was to take the office, so that there might always be a high-priest in Israel.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE GOLDEN CALF.

Now Moses remained upon the mountain for forty days and forty nights, hidden in the cloud, and alone with God. And the people did not know what to do, for they had no guide, and they could not move forward nor go backward, and only Aaron was with them. So they spoke to Aaron and asked him to make them idols which should lead them.

And Aaron asked them for the golden earrings which they wore, and they gave them to him, and he melted them

in a great fire, and made the gold into a figure of a calf, and then said to the people, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." And Aaron built an altar before the golden calf, and proclaimed a feast, and the people offered burnt sacrifices to the calf.

Then God spoke to Moses, and told him that the people had made a golden calf and were worshipping it, and said that He would destroy them because they had sinned against Him.

But Moses prayed for the people, and went down from the mountain. And he held in his hand two tables of stone which God had made, and upon the tables were written the ten commandments. And when Moses saw the people dancing round the image, and heard them singing to it, he was very angry, and flung down the tables of stone, and they were broken to pieces. And Moses went among the people, and threw down the image of the calf, and broke it in pieces, and stamped it to powder. And he mixed the powder with water, and made the people drink it.

And Moses was angry with his brother Aaron because he had made the idol and helped the people to sin. And he called to the people, "Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me;" and all the tribe of Levi came to him. Then Moses sent the Levites among the people, and told them to take their swords and to kill those who were worshipping the calf. And the Levites went and killed about three thousand men. And then Moses prayed again to the Lord for the people, and asked forgiveness for them because they had sinned.

But God sent a plague upon the people. And all the people mourned, and no man wore his ornaments, and they repented of the sin which they had done. Then Moses went

into the tabernacle, and the pillar of cloud came and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord spoke with Moses. And all the people were afraid, and worshipped, because they knew that the Lord was in the pillar of cloud.

And the Lord told Moses to hew two tables of stone like those which he had broken, and to come up again to Mount Sinai. And Moses did as God had told him, and the Lord came and spoke with him, and gave him laws for the people. And God wrote upon the tables of stone all the ten commandments. And Moses remained on the mountain for forty days and forty nights, and he ate no bread and drank no water, for God kept him. And because he had lived so long in the presence of the Lord, his face shone when he came out of the cloud, and the people were afraid of him, and he covered his face with a veil, so that they could not see the glory which shone about him.

CHAPTER XXII.

BUILDING THE TABERNACLE.

THEN the people began to build the tabernacle, as had been told to Moses. And they brought all their most precious things and gave them to the Lord, so that there was more than enough for the work. And the tabernacle was very beautiful, for there was nothing common in it; and it was all made of precious wood, and gold, and silver, and jewels, and scarlet, and blue, and purple, and fine linen.

And when the tabernacle had been made and set up, Moses anointed it and all that was in it with the holy oil. And when he had done so a cloud came down from heaven

and covered the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord came into the Holy of holies and shone upon the mercy-seat.

Afterwards Moses took the holy oil, and anointed Aaron and his sons, and set them apart for the service of the Lord. And so Aaron became the first high-priest, and his four sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, were the first priests.

And when they had been anointed and set apart to God, Aaron offered a bullock and a ram to the Lord, and sprinkled their blood upon the altar. And he laid them on the altar, and God sent fire from heaven and burned the sacrifice. And when the people saw it they were afraid, and they fell on their faces and worshipped God.

Now, it had been ordered that a fire should always be left burning upon the altar, and this fire only should be used in offering any sacrifice ; but Nadab and Abihu, the two eldest sons of Aaron, went to burn incense before the Lord, and they used other fire than that which they had been ordered to use ; and because they had done so, fire went out from the Lord and destroyed them.

Then many laws were given to the people, and they were told what animals they might eat, and what they were not allowed even to touch.

And after Nadab and Abihu had died God spake again to Moses, and ordered that even the high-priest himself should only enter into the Holy of holies once in the year, and that on that day he was to purify himself and offer a bullock and a ram to the Lord. And when he went into the Holy of holies to make atonement for the people, the high-priest was ordered to put off all his beautiful garments of blue, and scarlet, and purple, and gold, and to stand before the Lord, clothed only in white linen.

And he was ordered to burn incense within the veil, so

that the smoke of the incense might cover the mercy-seat. And then he was ordered to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice upon the mercy-seat and before it. And he was told to kill a goat for a sin-offering of the people, and to sprinkle its blood as he had sprinkled the blood of the bullock.

Now, as the priests were not sufficient in number to perform all the duties of the tabernacle, it was needful that others should be appointed to help them, and the Lord chose the whole tribe of Levi, and set them apart for the service of the tabernacle. And it was ordered that they should take down the tabernacle whenever the Israelites moved on, and put it up again whenever they remained in one place. And they had the charge of all the vessels that were used in the tabernacle, and they were ordered to pitch their tents next to the tabernacle, so that they might be always ready when they were wanted.

Now, this was a very honourable post; for the whole tribe of Levi was set next to the priesthood, because, when the Israelites worshipped the golden calf, the Levites had come over to the Lord's side and done His will.

Yet, they might not go into the tabernacle, nor see the ark, nor touch it. But, whenever the pillar of cloud moved onwards, Aaron and his sons went into the tabernacle, and covered up the ark, so that no one but themselves might see it, and then took down the veil that shut off the Holy of holies. And then, after the tabernacle had been taken down, the Levites carried away the ark by the golden poles which were fastened to its sides.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE MURMURING FOR FLESH.

AFTER the Israelites had remained for some time in the place where they were staying, so that the tabernacle, and the ark, and the vessels might be made, and the priests and Levites consecrated, and the law given to the people, the cloud rose off the tabernacle and went onwards for three days.

And during the whole time that they had remained near Mount Sinai, the manna fell daily, and supplied them with food. But they were a discontented people, and they murmured again, because they had no meat, nor fish, nor herbs, such as they used to have in Egypt.

And Moses was sorrowful, because they murmured against him, and he asked God what he should do. And God told him to take seventy elders and bring them to the door of the tabernacle, and promised that he would send his Spirit upon them, so that they might help Moses. And God said, that, because the people cried out for meat, and would not be content with the food which He gave them, He would send them so much meat that they should eat of it for a month, and be tired of it, and hate the sight of it. And Moses wondered how this could be, for there were more than six hundred thousand men, besides women and children.

Then God sent a great wind, and drove flocks of quails to the camp of the Israelites. And the quails fell on the ground and covered it for miles : and they lay on the ground nearly a yard deep. So the Israelites went among them and gathered great baskets full of them, each man many times more than he could eat.

And God was angry with them because they would not be content, though he had brought them out of the slavery in Egypt; and they had scarcely began to eat the quails, when a plague was sent among them, and many men died of the plague. And their bodies were buried in that land, and then the cloud moved away, and led the people to another place.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PROMISED LAND.

Now the name of the place where God led the people was called Kadesh-barnea, and it was close to the Promised Land.

Then God told Moses to choose twelve men, one from each tribe, and to send them into the land, so that they might come back and tell the people what kind of land it was, and what kind of people lived in it, and what kind of trees and herbs grew in it. And two of the twelve were Joshua, who was the commander of the Israelitish army and the friend of Moses, and Caleb, of the tribe of Judah. And they went into the promised land, and walked through it and searched it. And they found it to be a beautiful land, with much water, and very fruitful. And the fruits were so large, that when they wanted to bring back one bunch of grapes to show the people of Israel, they were obliged to cut a pole, and sling the bunch of grapes upon it and carry it between two men.

And when they returned, and were asked about the country, they said that it was fruitful, and pleasant, and covered with corn, but that the people who lived in it were powerful and dwelt in walled cities. And Caleb spoke to the people,

and told them to pass into the land and overcome those who lived in it and take possession of it. But ten of the twelve men were afraid, and said that the people were too strong, and that some of the people were giants, so that they could not take the walled cities.

So the Israelites were afraid, and they murmured against Moses and Aaron for bringing them to the land. And Joshua went out and spoke to them, and reminded them that God had promised the land and would give it to them, if they went into it. But the Israelites were angry with Joshua and Caleb, and were about to stone them.

Then, suddenly, the glory of the Lord came into the tabernacle, and the Lord spoke to Moses, and said that He would send a pestilence upon the people and destroy them, and give the promised land to Moses and his children. But Moses prayed for them, and asked God to pardon the people. And God heard the prayers of Moses, and He pardoned them. But He said that, because the people had rebelled against him, and murmured against Moses, and refused to enter the land of Canaan, none of them should pass into it, except those who wished to keep the word of the Lord.

And God turned them back again, and sent them to wander about in the wilderness for forty years, until all those were dead who refused to obey the commands of the Lord.

Then some of the people were sorry, and said that they would go up into Canaan. But Moses said that they might not do so, because God had ordered them to go back into the desert. But they were obstinate, and they went towards Canaan, leaving the ark and the tabernacle behind them, so that God was not with them. And the Canaanites came out and met them, and fought with them, and drove them back, and killed many of them.



The Return of the Spies.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE DEATH OF KORAH.

So God sent the people away from Canaan. And, instead of entering the promised land at once, as they might have done, and living in a country that was full of olive-trees, and vines, and pomegranates, and all pleasant fruits, and where water ran abundantly, and corn grew thickly, they were obliged to turn back again and pass the rest of their lives in the dry and barren desert, where they would suffer heat, and hunger, and thirst, until they died.

And God brought them into the desert, and fed them with the manna as before, and they wandered in the desert as they were led by the pillar of cloud.

Now after a time it happened that a man named Korah, who belonged to the tribe of Levi, and two men named Dathan and Abiram, of the tribe of Reuben, and many others, thought that they ought to be allowed to burn incense to the Lord, though God had ordered that none but Aaron and his sons should do so.

Then Moses told Korah to take his followers, and to offer before the Lord and burn incense, and that Aaron and his sons would also take their censers and burn incense before the Lord, and that the Lord should choose which He would accept.

So Korah, and two hundred and fifty men, took their censers and put incense in them, and came and stood before the tabernacle. But Dathan and Abiram would not come. So Moses commanded the people to remove from the tent of Dathan and Abiram, lest they should all be consumed. And

the people moved far away and left the families of Dathan and Abiram alone.

Then Moses spoke to the people and said, "Hereby shall ye know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of my own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up with all that belongs to them, then shall ye understand that these men have provoked the Lord."

And as soon as Moses had spoken these words, the earth opened under the tents of Dathan and Abiram and swallowed them up alive, and the earth closed upon them. And a great fire went out from the Lord, and burned up Korah and the two hundred and fifty men who offered incense.

And God ordered that Eleazar, the son of Aaron, should take the brazen censers which had fallen from their hands when they died, and make them into broad plates and cover the altar with them, so that every one who came to offer sacrifices might see the plates, and remember that none should dare to offer incense to the Lord except those whom God had appointed.

Then the people murmured against Moses, because Korah and those who shared his sin had been killed. And God was angry with them, and sent a pestilence among them. So Aaron took his censer, and ran and stood between the living and the dead, and prayed for the people; and God stopped the plague. And there were more than fourteen thousand men that died in that plague.

And, in order that the people should know whom God had chosen to be priest, Moses ordered that one man of every tribe should take his rod and lay it before the Lord in the tabernacle. And when they had done so, the rod of Aaron

blossomed and bare leaves and buds of almonds. So all the people knew that God had chosen Aaron for the priest, and they were afraid of the power of the Lord.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE SIN OF MOSES AND HIS PUNISHMENT.

GOD always keeps His word. So He led the Israelites about in the desert for thirty-nine years, and then brought them again towards the promised land. And just at the beginning of the fortieth year, the pillar of cloud stood still at Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, a place where there was no water.

And the people murmured again because there was no water; and again Moses and Aaron prayed to God to help them. And God told Moses to speak to the hard rock before the people, and that water should come from the rock.

But Moses was very angry because the people rebelled, and instead of speaking to the rock, he struck it twice with his rod, and said to the people, "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?" And the water gushed out, and the people drank.

But, because Moses and Aaron had not obeyed the Lord, and had spoken to the people as if by his own power he had brought water out of the rock, God said that neither he nor Aaron should enter the promised land.

Soon after this Aaron fell sick, and God told Moses to take the robes of the high-priest off Aaron and to put them on his eldest living son, Eleazar, and make him to be high-priest instead of his father. So Moses took Aaron's robes

and put them on Eleazar, and Aaron died without even seeing the promised land. And Eleazar, his son, became the high-priest.

And the Israelites again moved forward, and they again murmured against Moses for bringing them into the desert. And God was very angry with them, and sent serpents among the people, and they bit the people, and those who were bitten died.

And the people repented that they had murmured, and came to Moses, and asked him to pray for them. And Moses did so, and the Lord told him to make a serpent of brass, and place it on a pole, and set the pole in the ground. And God promised that every one who was bitten and looked upon the serpent should be healed.

Now the fortieth year was nearly finished, and the Lord led the Israelites through the land of the Amorites. And Sihon, their king, fought with the Israelites, and they conquered him, and took possession of his land. Then they went on to Bashan, and the king of Bashan fought with them and was killed, and the Israelites took his land also.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE DEATH OF MOSES.

AND now they had come close to the river Jordan, which flowed between them and the Promised Land.

Then God ordered the people to be numbered, and it was found that of all those who had been led out of Egypt, only Moses, and Joshua, and Caleb were alive. And Moses prayed that God would let him go over the Jordan into the

land of Canaan. But God would not allow him, because he had said that Moses should not enter the promised land. But God said that Moses might go to the top of a high mountain, called Pisgah, and see the land of Canaan before he died.

And God ordered him to take Joshua and bring him before the people, and lay his hands upon him and appoint him to lead the Israelites when Moses should die. And God promised to speak to Joshua through Eleazar the high-priest, so that he might know what to do.

Now some of the Israelites did not care to go over the Jordan because the land in which they were staying was very fruitful, and grew pasture for their cattle, and they asked to be allowed to remain there. So Moses parted the land among them, and he gave part of it to the tribe of Reuben, another to the tribe of Gad, and another to half of the tribe of Manasseh. And these two tribes and a half settled in the land.

Then the word of the Lord came to Moses, and God told him to take the Israelites into the Promised Land. And he ordered that they should destroy all the idols and images, and to take possession of the land. And the Lord appointed places for the remaining nine tribes and a half, but to the tribe of Levi he appointed no place, because they belonged to the service of the tabernacle and lived around it. And God ordered that each of the tribes should give to the Levites one tenth yearly of all that they had, so that the Levites might have their proper share of the land.

And they had forty-eight cities in which to live, and cattle, and land for them to feed upon.

Now, Moses knew that he was going to die. And he assembled the people together, and spoke to them, and told

them of all the wonderful things which God had done for them, and how He would fulfil the promises He had made. And Moses reminded them of the terrible punishments which came on the people when they disobeyed the commands of God. And he told them to keep all the commandments, and to love God with all their hearts, because He had been merciful to them, and brought them out of a land where they were slaves into a beautiful country where they might worship Him in peace. And he charged them again to destroy all the idols that belonged to the nations whom they would cast out, and told them to have no dealings with any nations that knew not the Lord.

And then Moses spoke to the people, and told them that he was very old, and that he must die. And he set Joshua over them as their leader, and told him to be strong and to believe in the Lord, and that God would help him and give him strength. And Moses wrote all the words of the law, and gave them to the priests and the Levites; and ordered that at least once in seven years all the people should be assembled together, the men, the women, and the children, and that the laws should be read aloud, that they all might hear.

And Moses blessed the children of Israel; and he foretold that the Lord would be their helper though they had offended Him, and that the nations should be driven out from before them.

And then Moses went up alone to the top of Mount Pisgah, and the Lord showed him the land which he had promised to his chosen people. And Moses died on the mountain, alone with God, and no one knew where he was buried.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FEASTS AND RITES.

NOW there were three great and solemn feasts which God ordained for the children of Israel, so that they might always remember that He had led them out of Egypt through the wilderness, and had brought them safely into the land which He had promised to them so many years before.

The first and the greatest was the feast of the Passover, in order to remind the Israelites that the destroying angel passed over the houses of the children of Israel when God sent him to kill all the first-born in the land. And in this feast they were to take a lamb or a kid, and roast it with fire, and eat it in haste, with their loins girded, and their staff in their hands, as if they were going for a journey. And they were ordered to eat unleavened bread and bitter herbs with the passover lamb.

And on that day, and for seven days after, they were to do no work, and on each day they were to offer burnt sacrifices to God.

The second sacred festival was the feast of First-fruits, and this was kept as a sign that all food is sent from God, and as a memorial that God had fed His people with manna for forty years. So when they had come into the Promised Land, where all pleasant fruits and corn grew, it was ordered that they should offer the first-fruits of all their harvest to the Lord, as acknowledging that all the fruits of the earth, as well as the cattle and all the flocks, were His.

Sometimes the feast of First-fruits was called the feast of

Pentecost, and sometimes the feast of Weeks, because it was kept seven weeks after the Passover.

The third great feast was the feast of Tabernacles, during which the Israelites were ordered to live in tents, or tabernacles, for seven days, in remembrance of the forty years which their fathers had spent in the wilderness, and when they had no homes and lived in tents.

And at each of these three feasts every male was ordered to come to the spot where the tabernacle was set and the ark rested. And each man was to bring an offering to the Lord, and was ordered to give according to his ability. He that had little gave little, and he that had much gave much.

And at each of these feasts the people were to rejoice for seven days before the Lord; and in order that the poor and the desolate might rejoice in common with the rich, they were helped by those whom the Lord had blessed in outward things.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE PASSAGE INTO THE PROMISED LAND.

AND now had come the time for the Israelites to enter the land which God had promised to them. And Joshua ordered the priests to take up the ark and go to the Jordan, the great river which was between them and the Promised Land. And as soon as the feet of the priests trod the waters of the Jordan, the river ceased to flow, and the priests walked on dry land into the middle of the river.

And they stood still, bearing the ark, and all the people walked across the river into the Promised Land. And when they had all gone over, the priests came out of the river, and

as soon as they had done so, the waters of the river came back again, and flowed on as before.

So the people passed into the land which God had promised to them so long before, and when they had done so, the manna ceased to fall, because there was plenty of food in the land of Canaan.

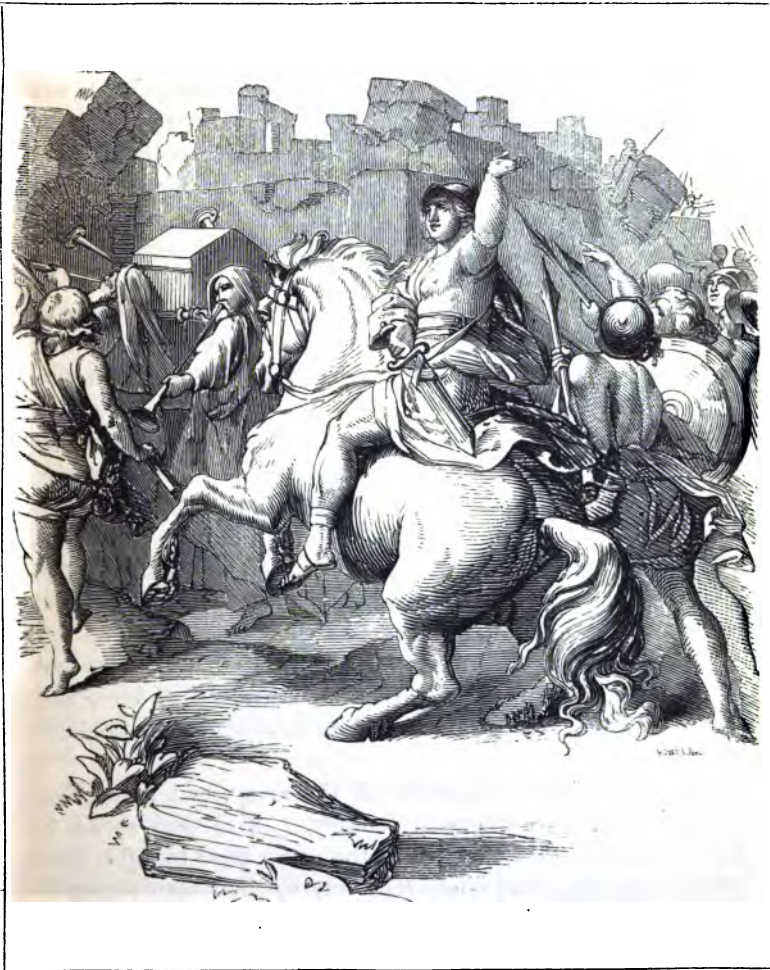
Now there was a great city called Jericho, with very high and strong walls, and many soldiers within it, so that the Israelites knew not how to take it. Then the Lord told Joshua to make the people walk once round the city every day for six days, with the ark, and the priests, and their trumpets. And on the seventh day they were to walk round the city seven times, and then the priests were to blow the silver trumpets and the soldiers and all the people were to raise a great shout.

And when they had done so, the walls of Jericho fell flat on the ground, and the Israelites took the city. And so it was that God helped His people, and taught them that He would keep His promises. And God taught them to conquer the whole land which He had given to them, and they took it, and rested in it, and tilled the ground, and built great cities.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE STORY OF GIDEÓN.

AFTER Joshua had died, Israel was ruled by judges for many years. And during these three hundred years, many wonderful things happened which showed the power of God, and many rulers were raised up to govern the people of Israel.



Joshua before Jericho.

Now it happened that the Israelites sinned greatly, and so the Lord allowed the Midianites to conquer them. And, after they had suffered for seven years, God sent one of his angels to a man named Gideon, and told him that he was appointed to lead the army of Israel, and save them from their enemies. And when Gideon would not believe that he could be chosen for such a work, the angel told him to lay on a rock some bread and meat which he had brought, and to pour the broth over them. And when Gideon had done so, the angel touched them with his staff, and fire came out of the rock and consumed them, and the angel vanished out of his sight. Then Gideon knew that an angel had spoken to him, and he was afraid.

And after this, Gideon could not quite believe that he was really chosen by God, and so he asked for a sign from heaven. And he laid a fleece of wool on the ground, and prayed that if God had chosen him, the dew should fall only on the fleece, and not on the ground. And in the morning he found the ground dry, and the fleece was full of water. Then he asked for another sign, and he prayed that the fleece might be dry and the ground wet. And in the morning it was as he had prayed, and so he was sure that God had called him, and would give him strength and wisdom to conquer the enemies of Israel.

So Gideon called together all the army, and found that he had thirty-two thousand soldiers. And God spoke to Gideon, and he said that if all the army went to fight, they might think that they conquered only by their own strength, and not by the help of God. So Gideon ordered that all who did not wish to fight might go home. And twenty-two thousand of them went away, so that he had only ten thousand men to meet all the great army of the Midianites.

Then God again spoke to Gideon, and said that too many men were left, and ordered that all the ten thousand should go down to the water and drink, and told Gideon to choose all those who drank by lifting the water in their hands. And there were only three hundred who did so, and the rest of the soldiers were sent away. So, instead of thirty-two thousand men, Gideon had only three hundred.

In the evening Gideon separated them into three companies of a hundred men in each company, and he gave to every man a trumpet and pitcher with a lamp inside it. And in the dead of night they lighted the lamps, and put them in the pitchers so that their light should not be seen, and went quietly towards the camp of the enemy. And when they had reached the camp, Gideon blew with his trumpet. And when his men heard it, they all blew their trumpets, and broke their pitchers, so that the lights were suddenly seen by the Midianites. So the enemy were frightened at the sudden blast of trumpets and the blaze of light, and they were confused and fought against each other, and fled away.

And Gideon fought again with the enemies of Israel until he had subdued them all, and there was peace for forty years. Then the people wanted to make Gideon their king, but he refused, and said, "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you, the Lord shall rule over you."

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE HISTORY OF SAMSON.

AFTER Gideon died, several judges ruled over Israel, and then the people fell again into sin, so that God allowed the

Philistines to conquer them. And for forty years the people of Israel were subject to the Philistines, who worshipped idols.

Now, there was a man of the tribe of Dan, whose name was Manoah, and his wife had no child. And one day an angel appeared to her, but she thought that he was a prophet, and did not know that he was an angel. And the angel told her not to drink wine, nor any strong drink, and not to touch anything unclean, and that she should have a son, and that he should be a Nazarite to God from the time that he was born. So she told Manoah, who prayed the Lord to send again the man of God so that he might teach them what to do to the child when it was born. And God heard the prayer of Manoah, and sent the angel again, and the woman ran and fetched her husband. And the angel repeated what he had said before. So Manoah asked him to wait while he dressed a kid, and to eat and drink with them. But the angel refused, and told Manoah to offer the kid as a burnt-offering to God. And Manoah did so, and as the flame of the sacrifice went up to heaven, the angel ascended in the flame, and Manoah and his wife fell on their faces for fear. And in time a son was born to her, and she called his name Samson. And he was a Nazarite to God from his birth; his hair was never cut, and he was not allowed to drink wine or any strong drink, nor to touch anything unclean, and the Spirit of the Lord was upon him.

Now, when Samson was grown up, he loved a Philistine woman, and wished to marry her. And his parents advised him not to do so, because she did not worship the true God, and belonged to the enemies of Israel. But he would not listen to them, and he went to Timnath, where she lived. And as he went a lion met him and roared against him.

And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and though he had no weapon, he tore the lion asunder and killed him.

And when he had killed the lion he went on his way and told no one. And he reached Timnath, and said that he would marry the woman. And as he came back by the same way, he went to look at the body of the lion, and found that a swarm of bees had made their combs in the body of the lion, for in that country the birds and beasts of prey eat any animal that is dead, and leave nothing but the bones. So he took some of the honeycombs out of the lion and gave them to his parents, but did not tell them where he had found them.

Now, when Samson married the woman, he made a riddle about the lion and the bees, and told the thirty young Philistine men who brought his wife, that if they could find out the riddle within the seven days of the feast, he would give them thirty sheets and changes of clothes, but that if they could not, they were to give him the same. And this was the riddle that he made:—

“Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.”

And they tried to find out the riddle for seven days, and they could not, because they did not know that he had killed a lion. So, on the seventh day they went to Samson's wife, and said that if she did not find out from her husband what was the answer to the riddle, they would burn her and all her father's house. So she asked him, and at last he told her, and she told the Philistines. And before the sun went down on the seventh day, they went to Samson and said, “What is sweeter than honey, and what is stronger than a lion?” So Samson knew that his wife had told them, and he was very

angry. And he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty Philistines, and took away their garments and gave them to the men. And he would not see his wife because she had told them; so she was given by her father to one of his friends.

After a while, in the time of wheat harvest, Samson went back to Timnath to see his wife, but her father would not allow him to do so, and said that she had been given to another man. So Samson was very angry, and he burned all the standing corn of the Philistines, together with their olive-trees and vineyards. And he fought against them and killed many of them, and went away to live on a great rock.

Then the Philistines came and ordered the Israelites to take Samson and bind him, and give him up to them. And three thousand men of the tribe of Judah went to the rock, and they bound Samson with two new cords, and gave him to the Philistines. And when the Philistines had received him, the Spirit of the Lord came on him, and he broke in pieces the new cords with which he was bound, and he took up the jaw-bone of an ass and killed a thousand men with it. And after he had done so he thirsted, and God made a hollow place in the jaw, and water came out, and he drank of it. And after these things he judged Israel for twenty years.

Now, Samson was the strongest man that has ever lived, because God gave him strength beyond that of man. Though he had conquered the Philistines so often, they were still at war with Israel; and one day, when they saw him going into Gaza, they were glad, for they thought that they would take him. So they shut the great gates of the city, and meant to kill him as he was going out in the morning. But during the night he went to the gates, and finding them shut, he

took the posts to which they were fastened and pulled them out of the ground, and carried them on his shoulders to the top of a hill, and left them there.

Although Samson was a very strong man when the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, he was not as good as he was strong, and he was easily persuaded to do wrong. And it happened that he loved a very wicked woman called Delilah. And the Philistines came to her and promised that they would give her a very great sum of money if she would find out where his great strength lay, and tell them, so that they might take Samson and bind him. So she asked Samson, and he would not tell her. But when she continued to ask him, he said that if he were bound with seven green withs he would be as weak as other men. So she waited until he was asleep, and she bound him with seven green withs, and called to him and said, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson." And there were men lying in wait ready to take him. But when he heard her words, he broke the withs to pieces, as if they had been burning tow, and his strength was not known.

Then Delilah asked him again, and he said that if he were tied with new ropes that had never been used, he would be as weak as another man. So she tied him with new ropes, but he broke them as easily as he had broken the withs. Again she asked him where his strength lay, and he began to yield, for he knew that his strength lay in his hair, which he was not allowed to cut, because he was a Nazarite. And he said that if the seven locks of his hair were to be woven with the web of the loom, his strength would go from him. So when he was asleep she wove the seven locks of his hair, and she had a number of men lying in wait for him, and she woke him and said, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson." And

he woke, and rose up, and carried away all the web, and the beam to which it was fastened.

Then Delilah wept, and she said that he had not been true to her, and she urged him continually until he was tired. And at last, when she had vexed him by continually asking, he told her the truth, and said that all his strength lay in his hair, so that if it were shaven off he would be as weak as other men. So when he was asleep she called a man to shave off all his hair, and she said again, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson." And his strength went away from him, and the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him to Gaza, and chained him, and made him work in the mill.

And they kept him in prison for a long time, and he was obliged to grind corn. But in course of time his hair began to grow again, and his strength returned with his hair. And on one of their great feast days they ordered that he should be brought out of prison so that the people might see him, and that he might make sport for them. So Samson was brought into the great house where the people were sitting, and they put him by the pillars which held up the roof of the house. And the house was full of men and women, and all the lords of the Philistines were there, and about three thousand were on the roof. Now by this time Samson's hair had grown again, and his strength had returned. And he took hold of one pillar with each hand, and bowed himself forward and broke down the pillars. And all the roof fell, and those who were on it and those who were in the house were killed by the fall, and Samson was killed with them. So the Philistines whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed in his lifetime.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE HISTORY OF RUTH.

DURING the time that the judges ruled over Israel, a widow named Naomi went to live in the land of Moab. And her two sons married women of that country, whose names were Orpah and Ruth. And the widow's two sons died, so that she was left alone with her daughters-in-law. So she determined to go back to her own land, and advised Orpah and Ruth to return to their friends in Moab. And Orpah went back, but Ruth refused, and when Naomi begged her again to go away, she said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

So the two went together until they came to Bethlehem, and arrived there at the beginning of harvest.

Now Naomi had a kinsman living at Bethlehem whose name was Boaz. And Boaz was a very rich man, and had fields, and flocks, and herds. And as the harvest was being gathered, Ruth went into the field to glean, and she came upon a field belonging to Boaz, and gleaned there. And when Boaz came to look at the reapers, he asked them who Ruth was. And they said that she was the Moabitish damsel who came with Ruth.

Then Boaz behaved kindly to Ruth, and told her not to go into any field except his own, and said that he knew who she was, and all her history. And he told the reapers not to

gather all the harvest, but to drop handfuls of corn so that she might pick them up. And she did so, and she carried home the corn to Naomi. And Boaz told Ruth to remain in his fields all the harvest time; and she did so, and gleaned every day.

And when the harvest was nearly over, and the labourers were winnowing the barley on the threshing-floor, Naomi told Ruth to mark where Boaz lay down to sleep, and to lie at his feet. And she did so, and when he awoke he promised to do the duty of a kinsman by her. Now, according to the Jewish law, whenever a man died leaving no children, it was the duty of his brother to marry her; and if they had any children, they were to be counted as belonging to his dead brother. But if he did not choose to do so, his shoe was loosed from his foot in the presence of the elders, and he was disgraced because he would not raise up his brother's house. Boaz therefore said that there was a nearer relation than himself, but that if he refused to take Ruth, he himself would marry her, and would buy again the land which Elimelech, the father of Naomi, had been obliged to sell.

So Boaz went next morning to the gate of the town and sat down, and when he saw the kinsman passing he called to him, and brought him before ten elders of the city, and asked him whether he would buy back the land which Elimelech had sold. And he agreed to do so. Then Boaz said that he must buy it from Ruth, and must marry her according to the law. But he would not do so, and his shoe was taken from his foot and given to Boaz, in token that the duty of a kinsman had passed to him. So Boaz spoke to the elders and all the people, and called them to witness that he would buy from Ruth all the land that had belonged to Elimelech, and would take Ruth to be his wife.

And all the people bore witness, and he took Ruth for his wife, as he had promised. And they had a son whose name was Obed, and he was the father of Jesse, who was the father of David. So because Boaz had done rightly, and obeyed the law, his family became kings over Israel, and in his family Jesus Christ was born twenty-eight generations afterwards, and in the same place where he had lived and met with Ruth.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ELI AND SAMUEL.

Now after the Israelites had been under the judges for about four hundred years, they became very wicked, and they worshipped idols; and instead of obeying the law which God had given them, every one did what he chose, whether it was right or wrong. But God always helps His people, and so He prepared a great prophet, who should belong to Him from childhood, and who should speak His word to the people, and bring them back again to the true worship.

There was a man named Elkanah who had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah, and Peninnah had many children, but Hannah had none. So every year when Elkanah went to sacrifice to the Lord, he gave portions to Peninnah and all her children; but because Hannah had none he could only give her a portion for herself. And when this happened year by year, and Peninnah provoked Hannah because she had no children, Elkanah found Hannah weeping, and asked why she wept. And he tried to comfort her. But Hannah went to the temple and began to pray that God would send her a son, and she said that she would dedicate him to the Lord

from his childhood. And Eli, the high-priest, was sitting in the temple, and he thought that Hannah was drunk, and he rebuked her. But she told Eli that she was praying, and he joined in her prayer.

And God heard her prayer, and she had a son, and she called his name Samuel, which means, Asked of God, because she had asked God for him. And when the child was weaned, Hannah took him to Eli, and gave him to the service of God. And she went away home, and Samuel grew up and ministered to the Lord before Eli. And Hannah had other children after Samuel, three sons and two daughters.

Now, Eli had two sons, whose names were Hophni and Phinehas, and because they were the sons of the high-priest they were priests and ministered in the temple. But they were very wicked men, and though Eli was a good man he did not restrain his sons, so that they offended God by their sins. And a prophet was sent to Eli to tell him that because his sons had acted wickedly and he had not checked them, they should both perish in one day, and that God would raise up a faithful priest, who would do His will.

After these things Eli grew very old, and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, and Samuel ministered to him. And in the night the voice of the Lord came to Samuel, and called him by his name. Then Samuel thought that Eli had called him, and he rose and went to him. But Eli said that he had not called him, and told him to lie down again. And again the voice of the Lord called to him, and again he went to Eli. And when he had lain down again, God called to him the third time. Then Eli knew that the Lord had called Samuel, and told him to go back, and if the voice should speak to him again to say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

And Samuel went back, and the Lord called him again, and he answered as Eli had told him. And then God spoke to Samuel, and told him that the house of Eli should be judged for the wickedness of his sons, and that the ears of all who heard should tingle. And in the morning Eli asked Samuel what had been said to him. And when Samuel told him, he said, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good." And God was with Samuel, and all Israel knew that he was a prophet of the Lord, and whenever he spoke all Israel listened.

Soon after Samuel had been called the Philistines came and made war against Israel, and the two armies fought together, and the Israelites were beaten and fled away. Then the elders thought that if they took the ark from Shiloh and brought it into the battle, God would take care of it and prevent it from being taken. And when the ark came into the camp the Israelites shouted for joy, and the Philistines heard them. And when they found that the ark had been brought into the camp they were afraid, for they knew what great things God had done, and that He had smitten the Egyptians with the plague.

On the morrow they fought again, and the Israelites were again conquered. And the ark was taken by the Philistines, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were killed. Then a messenger ran to tell Eli. And Eli was ninety-eight years old, and he sat upon a seat by the wayside. And when he heard that his sons were dead and that the ark of the Lord was taken, he fell from his seat and his neck was broken, and so he died.

In the meanwhile the Philistines took the ark and carried it away to Ashdod, and put it in the temple of Dagon, one of their idols. And when they came to look at it on the next

day, Dagon had fallen down before the ark. So they set the idol upright and went away. And again Dagon fell down before the ark, and the head and the hands of the idol were cut off upon the threshold of the door, so that the Philistines began to be afraid.

Then great plagues came upon them because they had taken the ark of God, for their land was overrun with mice, and they were afflicted with boils and painful diseases. So they determined to send the ark back again, and they made golden images of their plagues and laid them by the ark as an offering, and put the ark on a new cart drawn by two cows which had never felt the yoke, and they let the cows go where they would. And they went straight to the place where the Israelites were, and the ark was taken to Kirjath-jearim, where it remained for many years.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE FIRST KING OF ISRAEL.

AFTER these things Samuel became judge over Israel, and he ruled the people well, because he was a prophet as well as a judge, and he went from place to place every year. And when the Philistines came again to fight against Israel, Samuel prayed for help and offered a lamb, and the Lord heard his prayer. And a great thunderstorm fell upon the Philistines, so that they fled, and the Israelites got back the cities which had been taken away from them.

When Samuel began to be old he made his two sons, Joel and Abiah, judges over Israel. But they did not act as

their father had done, and were wicked judges, taking bribes and giving away judgment for money.

Then the elders came to Samuel, and said that he was old, and that his sons did not walk in his ways, and they asked him to choose them a king who should reign over them. And this request displeased Samuel, so he went and prayed and asked God what he should do. And God told him what to say. Then he went to the people and spoke to them, and advised them not to ask for a king, but to be content with the Lord, who was a better king than any man could be. And he told them that the king would oppress them, and take their fields, and their cattle, and their money, and make them fight for him, so that they would be sorry that they had wanted a king.

But they would not listen to Samuel, and said that they would have a king, so that they should be like all the other nations. And, at last, God said to Samuel, "Hearken unto their voice and make them a king." So Samuel sent them away, and waited until the Lord should tell him what to do.

And as they murmured greatly, God said that they might have a king, but that they would repent. And the word of the Lord came to Samuel, and sent him to a young man named Saul, and told him to anoint Saul to be king over Israel. And Samuel did so, and Saul became the king.

Now the Israelites had behaved very wickedly, for they had disobeyed God and worshipped idols, and married with the people of the land, and so God had allowed a great nation called the Philistines to fight them and conquer them. So Saul gathered together the people, and fought against the Philistines. And, though the Israelites had no swords or spears, and were obliged to fight with mattocks and plough-

shares and ox-goads, they conquered the Philistines, and took their arms from them.

And God spoke often to Samuel, and told Saul what he was to do. And God commanded him to make war against other nations, and to take nothing of their property. But Saul disobeyed God, and kept for himself much cattle.

CHAPTER XXXV.

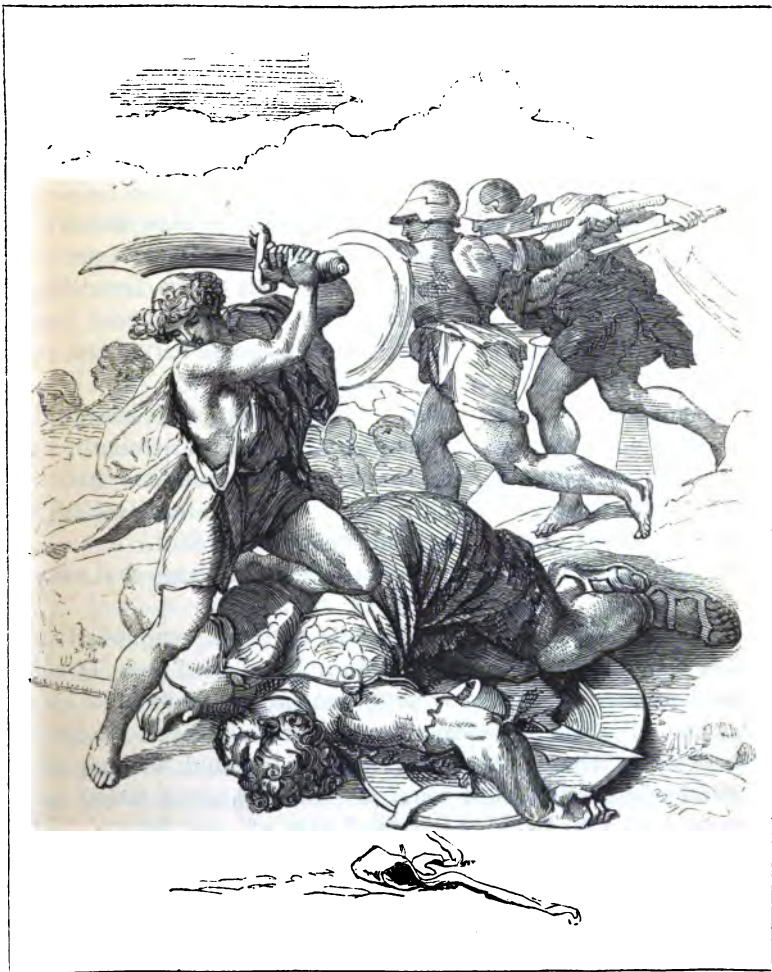
THE HISTORY OF DAVID.

Now, because Saul acted wickedly, God called to Samuel and told him that He would raise another king, who should obey His commands and love Him. And He sent Samuel to the house of a man called Jesse, who had many sons.

And Samuel made the sons pass before him, and when he came to the youngest, whose name was David, God told Samuel that David was to be the king of Israel, and Samuel anointed him, and the Spirit of God came upon David and made him wise and brave. Still David was only a shepherd, and after Samuel had anointed him he went back to his sheep.

Now Saul became very unquiet, for an evil spirit came on him. And he sent for David to play on the harp to him, because when David played the evil spirit went away, and he was quiet; and Saul loved David, and took him to live in his house.

Again the Philistines assembled to fight against Israel, and sent one of their soldiers, who was a giant, to stand in front of the army and call for a man to fight with him.



David and Goliath.

And Goliath, for this was the name of the giant, called to the Israelites and said, "Choose you a man from you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants and serve us."

Now all the Israelites were afraid, and no man dared to go and fight Goliath. But it happened that David went to the camp, and when he heard Goliath call to the Israelites, he said that he would go and fight for them. And Saul lent him armour, but he would not use it, because he trusted in God.

So he went to meet Goliath with nothing in his hand but his staff and his sling. And when he came near Goliath, he put a stone in his sling and threw it at the giant, and struck him in the forehead and killed him. And he took Goliath's sword and cut off his head, and brought it to Saul.

And when the Philistines saw Goliath fall, they fled away for fear.

After this Saul became jealous of David, and tried to kill him, but God protected him. Then Saul gave David his daughter Michal for a wife, and pretended to love him as before. Now Jonathan, the son of Saul, loved David as a brother, though he knew that David should be king instead of himself. And when he found that his father intended to kill David, he warned him of the danger, and David fled away.

Then, because David was strong, and wise, and brave, great companies of soldiers came to him. And he fought with the Philistines and conquered them. And then Saul took his armies and pursued David, but he could not kill him, because God kept him. And twice, when David might

have killed Saul, he would not, because Saul was the king whom God had appointed. And Saul was ashamed because he had behaved cruelly to David, but he did not cease from his jealousy.

And at last he fought against the Philistines, and they killed him and his son Jonathan. So the people chose David in the place of Saul, and made him their king. And David reigned over the people, and for many years he was a good man and a wise king.

But one day David saw a woman named Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, one of his officers. And David did very wickedly, and took Bathsheba away; and lest Uriah should find it out, he sent orders to the army to place Uriah in a spot where he would be killed. Then God sent a prophet named Nathan, who went to David and reproved him, and told him of his sin. And God spoke to David and Nathan, and said that because he had acted wickedly, his child should die, and that his house should be filled with blood, because he had caused the blood of Uriah to be shed.

And the words of God came true, even in David's lifetime, for his sons quarrelled and fought; and Absalom, who was David's favourite son, killed his brother Ammon. Afterwards Absalom rebelled against his father, and called himself king, and made war against David. And David was obliged to fight against his own son, and gave the command of the army to Joab.

So the two armies fought, and Absalom was conquered, and he fled away. But as he was riding from the field, his long hair was caught in a branch, and he was left hanging to the bough by his hair. And Joab was pursuing Absalom, and when he saw him hanging by his hair he took his weapon and killed him.

After this David was quiet on his throne, and all things went well with him. But he became proud, and ordered the people to be numbered. And because he was so proud of the numbers of his people, and of the well-being of the land, God sent the prophet Gad to him to rebuke him. And God said that He would send one of three plagues upon the people; either there were to be seven years of famine, or his enemies were to conquer and pursue him for three months, or three days' pestilence was to come on the land.

And David repented of his sins, and said that it was better to fall into the hands of God than of man.

So a terrible pestilence came on the land, and seventy thousand men died of it. And David saw the angel whom God sent to bring the pestilence. And he prayed to God for the people, and the prophet Gad came to him again and told him to go to the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, and offer sacrifices to God. And he bought the threshing-floor and the oxen, and offered them as a sacrifice, and the plague was taken away.

And David continued to reign until he became very old. And Adonijah, his fourth son, tried to make himself king. So Bathsheba told David what Adonijah had done. And David sent for his son Solomon, whom he knew that God had chosen, and he caused Nathan the prophet and Zadok the priest to anoint him to be king over Israel.

So, when Adonijah found that Solomon had been anointed to be the king, he was afraid, and went to the tabernacle, and laid hold of the horns of the altar. And he went to Solomon and asked forgiveness. And Solomon was very kind, and forgave him, and sent him home to his own house. Then David called his son Solomon, and charged him to keep the laws of God, and told him that as long as he did so God



Solomon Crowned King.

would bless him. And then David died, being seventy-one years old, and Solomon became the king.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE FIRST TEMPLE.

Now David had wished to build a temple to the Lord, but God would not allow him to do so, because he had shed much blood. So Solomon his son, who had not been a man of war, was chosen for that purpose. And God appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and asked Solomon to choose anything which he would wish to have. And Solomon asked for wisdom to help him in ruling the kingdom. And because he had chosen rightly, God gave him riches, and power, and long life, and he was the wisest and richest king that had ever come upon the earth.

And Solomon went to Hiram, king of Tyre, and asked him to send cedar and fir-trees and skilful workmen. And Hiram did so, and Solomon built the temple of the Lord. And no tool was heard while it was built; for all the stone and wood were prepared ready for being laid, and neither axe nor hammer was used in the building. And the temple was very splendid, made of stone, and cedar, and fir, and olive wood. And it was overlaid with gold within, and covered with carved work, because it was the house of God. And round the temple were several great courts. One court was for the Gentiles,—that is, for all those who were not Jews, and there was another for the women, and another for the Israelitish men, and another for the priests.

And when he had finished the temple, Solomon assembled all the people together and made a prayer to the Lord, and dedicated the temple to God. And he brought the ark and put it in the Most Holy place; and when he had done so the glory of the Lord filled the house, and even the priests could not stand to minister, because of the cloud. And Solomon held a great feast for seven days, and offered burnt sacrifices. And Solomon became so wise that all nations came to hear him. And he made the nation very rich, and he was the wisest king upon the earth.

But when he grew old, Solomon turned away from the Lord, and took wives, who worshipped idols. And his wives taught him to worship idols also, and to offer sacrifices before false gods.

So God was angry with Solomon, and told him that the kingdom should be taken from his family, and that his son should only be king over one tribe.

Now there was a young man named Jeroboam, who was a brave and a wise soldier, and Solomon had raised him to a high place. And the prophet Ahijah met Jeroboam, and took his mantle and rent it into twelve pieces. And he gave ten of the pieces to Jeroboam, saying, that God would give him ten of the twelve tribes. And when Solomon heard this, he wished to kill Jeroboam; but Jeroboam fled away into Egypt.

And after Solomon had reigned over all Israel for forty years he fell ill and died, and his son Rehoboam became king in his stead. And Solomon was about sixty years old when he died.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE SEPARATION.

WHEN Rehoboam was to be crowned, Jeroboam and many of the people came to him and asked him to take off some of the burdens which Solomon, his father, had laid upon them. But he spoke harshly to them, and said that instead of taking away their burdens he would make them heavier. And when he sent Hadoram to gather the taxes, the people stoned him and he died.

So Rehoboam fled to Jerusalem, and many of the tribe of Judah remained with him, but the ten other tribes followed Jeroboam and made him their king. So there were two kings—one of Judah and the other of Israel—as God had spoken to Solomon and to Jeroboam through the prophet Ahijah.

Now Jeroboam was a bad man, and he set up two golden calves for idols, and the people worshipped them and turned aside from God.

And God sent a prophet who came to Jeroboam as he stood at the altar to offer incense. And the prophet said that there should come a king of the house of Judah named Josiah, who should destroy all the idols. And he said that as a sign the altar should be rent and the ashes poured out.

Now Jeroboam was angry and stretched out his hand and called to his men to take the prophet. And as he did so his hand became withered, so that he could not draw it back. And the altar was rent and the ashes poured out on the ground as the prophet had spoken. Then Jeroboam was

afraid, and asked the prophet to pray for him. And he did so, and Jeroboam's hand was restored again to him.

But Jeroboam did not cease from his wickedness, and set up idols and made priests of the lowest of the people.

Then God sent His word to the prophet Ahijah, and he foretold that God would destroy the whole house of Jeroboam, because he had worshipped idols, and would cause that the kingdom should pass away from him and all his children should be killed.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

AFTER Jeroboam had died, Nadab, his son, was king in his stead. And Baasha slew him and made himself the king of Israel. And when he was king he killed all the children of Jeroboam, so that the word of the Lord came true, and all the house of Jeroboam perished.

And because Baasha was a bad man, and did evil while he reigned, God sent a prophet to say that none of his children should have the kingdom. And soon after Elah, his son, had come to the throne, Zimri, the captain of half his chariots, killed him and all his children, and became king of Israel and reigned for seven years.

And Omri, the captain of the host, made war against Zimri and took the city in which Zimri was. And when Zimri knew that the city was taken he went unto his palace, and set fire to it and died there. And Omri was king, and was worse than any of those who had gone before.

Now Omri had a son named Ahab, and when he came to be king of Israel he was very wicked indeed, and set up idols, and served the false God called Baal and made altars to him. And his wife Jezebel was even more wicked than himself.

Now there was a great prophet in Israel, called Elijah. And God told Elijah that there would be a famine of three years in the land, and that there would be no rain. So Elijah went to the brook Cherith, and there he drank of the brook and God sent ravens to him, and every day they brought him bread and meat. And after that time he went to the house of a widow woman. And though she had nothing to eat but a little meal and a small vessel of oil, she gave it to Elijah because he was a prophet. And God was pleased with her and wrought a miracle, so that they were fed for many months with that little meal and oil.

And the son of the woman fell sick and died. And when Elijah knew it he prayed for her, and God was pleased to bring the lad back to life, and Elijah gave him again to his mother.

After the three years had passed away, God sent Elijah to tell Ahab that there would be much rain. And when he saw Ahab he told him to gather all the prophets and priests of Baal, and to put wood upon an altar and dress a bullock and lay it upon the wood. And he said that he would do the same, and that they should all pray to their gods, and whoever answered by fire should be the true God.

So they did so. And four hundred and sixty prophets stood at the altar of Baal, but Elijah was alone.

And the prophets of Baal prayed to their idol all day, and they leaped upon the altar and cut themselves with knives, but there was no answer.

And when the time of evening sacrifice came, Elijah told



Elijah Fed by the Ravens.

the people to throw water upon the altar which he had built. And three times they poured four barrels of water over it, so that the water ran over the bullock, and the wood, and the altar, and filled the trench which he had made round the altar, so that all might know that there was no fire under the wood.

Then Elijah prayed aloud, and God sent fire from heaven, and the fire consumed the wood, and the bullock, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up all the water that was in the trench. And all the people fell on their faces, and cried, "The Lord, He is the God." And Elijah called to the people and told them to kill all the prophets of Baal. And they did so, and not one of them escaped.

Then Ahab did a very wicked thing. For he coveted the vineyard of a man named Naboth. But Naboth would not sell it. And Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, advised him to summon Naboth before the judge and to bring false witnesses against him. And he did so, and Naboth was condemned and stoned to death. And when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead he went to take the vineyard. But Elijah the prophet went and met Ahab, and foretold that because he had done wickedly the dogs should lick his blood on the spot where Naboth was killed, and that all his sons should be killed, and that the dogs should eat Jezebel under the walls of Jezreel.

And Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, came to make war with Ahab. And Ahab went to battle in his chariot, and a man drew a bow at a venture, and the arrow struck Ahab in a joint of his armour, so that he was wounded, and in the evening he died. And when they brought his body to Samaria they washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria, in the place where Naboth had been killed. And the dogs licked the blood of Ahab there, and the words of the Lord came true.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ASCENT OF ELIJAH.

AFTER Ahab was dead his son Ahaziah ruled over Israel. And he was a wicked man, and did as his father had done, and worshipped Baal.

And it happened that Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber, and he was very ill and feared lest he should die. So he sent messages to the idol Baal-zebub to ask whether he should recover from his illness. And as they went God sent the prophet Elijah, who met them, and said that because Ahaziah had done wickedly in worshipping Baal-zebub he should die of his hurt.

And when they came back Ahaziah was very angry and asked what manner of man it was who had met them. And when they told him that he was a hairy man with a leather girdle about him, Ahaziah knew that it was Elijah. So he sent an officer with fifty men, and ordered him to take Elijah prisoner and bring him with them. And they found Elijah sitting on a hill. And when they tried to take him, fire came down and consumed them. Then another officer with fifty men were sent, and they were consumed in the same manner.

Then a third officer was sent, and when he saw Elijah he fell on his knees and asked that he and his men might be spared. So Elijah went with him to the king, and told him that he should die; and it was as he had said.

And now the time was come when Elijah was to be taken out of the world. Some time before he went to Ahaziah he had taken a servant named Elisha, who left all that he had

and followed him because he was a prophet of the Lord. And Elijah went towards the river Jordan, and Elisha was with him. And as they stood by the bank of the river, Elijah took off his mantle and wrapped it together, and struck the water with it, and the water gave way on each side, so that they went through on dry ground, as the Israelites had done when the ark was first brought unto the river. And there was a great company of the sons of the prophets, who knew that Elijah was to be taken away, and they stood at a distance and watched.

And when they stood on the opposite side of the river Elijah asked Elisha what he should do for him before he was carried away. And Elisha was wise, and asked that a double portion of his spirit should rest upon him. And Elijah said that he had asked a hard thing, but that if Elisha were present when he was taken away he should have his wish. Then, suddenly, while they were talking, there appeared a chariot and horses all of fire. And they were separated by the chariot, and Elijah was taken up in a whirlwind to heaven. And as he went up his mantle fell from him upon Elisha, as a token that the spirit of prophecy had come upon him as he had asked. And he turned back to Jordan, and struck the water with the mantle as Elijah had done, and the waters parted asunder and he went over on dry land. So when the sons of the prophets saw that the waters parted before Elisha, they knew that he was a prophet as Elijah had been; and they went and bowed down before him.

CHAPTER XL.

ELISHA THE PROPHET.

WHEN Elisha had received the mantle of his master he became the greatest prophet in the land, and all knew that God was with him. And while he was staying at Jericho the people complained that the water of the place was bad. So he asked for some salt in a new cruse, and he took it and threw into the water, and said, "Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters, there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land." And it was as he had said, and the waters were healed. Now there was a certain widow of the sons of the prophets, and because her husband had owed money when he died, her two sons would have been taken as slaves in order to pay the debt. And she cried to Elisha and asked him to help. And he said to her, "What shall I do for thee? tell me what hast thou in the house?" And she said, "Thine handmaid hath not anything in the house, save a pot of oil." Then he told her to borrow as many empty vessels as she could, and her sons brought them into the house. Then Elisha told her to pour the oil out of her little pot into the vessels, and the oil filled them all. Then Elisha told her to sell the oil, and she did so, and paid the debt, and her sons were not taken as slaves.

As Elisha went about the country, he often passed through Shunam. And a certain rich woman who lived there used to ask him to come in and eat bread. And when she found that he often passed by, she spoke to her husband, and they built a chamber for him, and put there a bed and a lamp, and a table and a stool, so that he might always find

shelter whenever he came by. And when Elisha saw that she was kind to him, he called her and asked her what she most wished. And she said that she had no child, and that she desired much to have a son. And Elisha told her that it would be as she wished, and in course of time she had a son.

Now after the child was grown he went into the field to see his father with the reapers. And he suddenly fell ill, and cried to his father, "My head, my head!" And he was taken to his mother. Then he sat on her knees until noon, and then he died.

And when his mother found that her son was dead, she laid him on Elisha's bed, and went at once to Mount Carmel to find Elisha. And when he saw her coming he sent his servant Gehazi to ask after her husband and her child. And she answered that it was well with them. But she came to Elisha and took hold of his feet, and then she told him that her son was dead.

So Elisha gave to Gehazi his staff and sent him to Shunam, and told him to lay it on the mouth of the child. And Gehazi did so, but there was no life in him. And he came back and told his master.

Then Elisha and the woman went together to the house, and Elisha went into his chamber and fastened the door, and began to pray that God would give back the child. And he stretched himself on the child and put his mouth upon the child's mouth, and his eyes on the child's eyes, and his hands on the child's hands, and prayed. And the spirit of the child back again, and he grew warm, and he opened his eyes. Then Elisha called the woman, and when she saw that her son was alive she bowed herself to Elisha's feet, and took her son and went out.

After this, as Elisha was travelling towards Gilgal, there

was a dearth in the land, and the sons of the prophets were obliged to gather herbs out of the fields. And one day when they were preparing a great pot full of herbs, one of them took some poisonous wild gourds and put them into the pot, and they all ate of them. And when they found out what they had been eating they were frightened, and they cried out to Elisha, and said, "O thou man of God, there is death in the pot." Then Elisha took some meal and threw it into the pot, and took away the poison from it.

Then there came a man who brought to Elisha some first-fruits of the harvest, twenty loaves and some ears of corn. And Elisha told him to set them before the people. And his servant said, "What! should I set this before a hundred men?" But he ordered that it should be set before them, and there was enough, and more than enough, for all.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE STORY OF NAAMAN.

AND Elisha went to live in Samaria. And there was a man named Naaman, who was chief of the Syrian army, and he was smitten with leprosy, and he could not be healed, and was obliged to go away from all his friends and live by himself.

Then it happened that his wife had a maid-servant who was an Israelite, and she said to her mistress, "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy." So the king of Syria wrote a letter to the king of Israel, and sent him a great present and asked him to heal Naaman of his leprosy. And

when the king received the letter he rent his clothes, and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?" For he thought if he refused to do so, the king of Syria would make war upon him.

But when Elisha heard it, he sent to the king, and said that if Naaman would come to him he should know that there was a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his chariot and his horses, and stood at the gate of Elisha's house. And Elisha would not so much as come out of his door, but he sent a message to Naaman, and told him to wash seven times in the river Jordan and he should be healed.

Then Naaman was angry, because he thought that Elisha would have come out and struck his hand over the place and healed him. And he said, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the rivers in Israel? may I not wash in them and be clean?" But his servants spoke to him, and said, "If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean."

So Naaman did as he had been told, and he dipped himself seven times in the river Jordan, and he was healed of his leprosy. Then Naaman came back to Elisha and asked him to take a present. And Elisha would not receive anything. And Naaman said that he would always worship the Lord Jehovah, and asked for two mules' burden of earth to make an altar with.

But after he had gone away, Elisha's servant Gehazi thought that he would induce Naaman to give him something. So he waited until Naaman had gone for some distance, and then he ran after him. And when Naaman saw Gehazi running after him, he stopped and got down from his

chariot, and asked him if all were well. And Gehazi told him a lie, and said that two sons of the prophets had come to Elisha, and that his master had sent him to ask him for a talent of silver and for two changes of garments. And Naaman gave him two talents of silver and two changes of garments, and sent them with Gehazi to Elisha's house. And Gehazi took them and hid them, and went before his master as usual. Then Elisha asked him, "Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" and he said that he had been nowhere. Then Elisha said, "Went not mine heart with thee when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money and to receive garments, and olive-yards and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and men-servants and maid-servants? The leprosy, therefore, of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and unto thy seed for ever." And immediately the leprosy fell upon him, and he went out from his master's presence a leper as white as snow.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE DEATH OF JEZEBEL.

AFTER Ahab and his son Ahaziah were both dead, Jehoram, the grandson of Ahab, came to the throne.

Now the captain of the army was a man named Jehu, and the word of God came to the prophet Elisha, telling him to appoint Jehu to be king over Israel. And a young prophet took oil and went and anointed him. And he prophesied that all the house of Ahab should perish, and that Jezebel also should be killed, and that none should bury her.

And Ahaziah, king of Judah, had come to see Jehoram in Jezreel. And when Jehu knew where Jehoram was, he mounted his chariot, and drove to Jezreel, and took his bow and arrows, and killed Jehoram. And he sent his soldiers after Ahaziah, and they killed him also. Then he saw Jezebel looking out of a window, and he ordered her to be thrown down, and she lay dead upon the ground. And afterwards he sent to bury her, but the dogs had eaten her, so that the word of the Lord was fulfilled.

Jehu, at the command of God, next sent orders to kill all the sons of Ahab, seventy in number, and he destroyed all the house of Ahab, killed all his relations, and his friends.

Then he pretended to serve Baal, and ordered that all the priests of Baal should be assembled. And when they were gathered together in the house of Baal, Jehu sent his soldiers among them, and killed all the priests, and all those who came to worship the idol. And he broke the altar, and pulled down the house of Baal. But still he was a wicked man, and worshipped the golden calves which Jeroboam had set up. And Jehoahaz his son was king in his stead.

And, as the kingdom of Israel had been separated from Judah by violence and bloodshed, so it continued through many reigns, until at last the ten tribes, which were called the Israelites, were taken captive by the Assyrians, and none of them returned to their own land. Altogether, the kingdom of Israel lasted for two hundred and fifty years.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH.

THEN there was war between the king of Judah and the king of Israel, until the time of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, and he made peace with the king of Israel. But though there was peace, yet Jehu killed Ahaziah, king of Judah, at the same time with Jehoram, king of Israel, and made himself to be king.

And the son of Ahaziah, named Jehoash, came to the kingdom. And he ordered the temple of the Lord should be repaired, for it had been robbed by Shishak, king of Egypt, in the reign of Rehoboam. And much money was brought by the people, and the temple was repaired. But Hazael, the king of Syria, fought with Judah, and so Jehoash took all the gold ornaments of the temple, and gave them to Hazael, that he might go away.

And his servants plotted against him, and killed him, and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead. And Amaziah reigned well for some years, but he provoked Jehoash, the king of Israel, and Jehoash fought with him, and conquered him, and took all the furniture of the temple and of the palace, and took away the spoil with him. And Amaziah was killed as his father had been.

After a time there arose a good king of Judah called Hezekiah, who trusted in the Lord, and took down all the idols, and destroyed the temples. And, because he found that the people used to burn incense before the brazen serpent which Moses had made, he broke it in pieces, and told

the people that it was no god, and nothing but a piece of brass.

And Sennacherib, king of Assyria, besieged Jerusalem, and Rabshakeh, his general, spoke blasphemous words against God. And Hezekiah prayed to the Lord for help, and God sent His angel, and brought a sudden plague upon the Assyrians, so that in one night one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrian soldiers died.

After this Hezekiah was very sick, and thought he should die. And the prophet Isaiah went to him, and told him that he should recover, and that he should live fifteen years longer. And as a sign that his words were true, the shadow went back ten degrees upon the dial.

After Hezekiah died, Manasseh and Amon reigned over Judah. And they were both wicked men, and worshipped idols. Now, there was a good king named Josiah, who was the son of Amon, and he was only eight years old when he came to the kingdom. And he gathered together money and again repaired the temple.

And while the workmen were engaged in the temple, Hilkiah the scribe found the book of the law which Moses had written. And Josiah assembled the people, and read the law to them. And he took away all the idols out of the land, and destroyed their temples, and defiled their altars. And he reigned well for thirty-one years.

Then Josiah went to war with Pharaoh-nechoh, king of Egypt, and he was killed in battle, and his people brought his body back and buried him.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE CAPTIVITY.

AFTER some years, when Jehoiakim was king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, made war against him, and conquered him, and took away the king and all the chiefs of the people into Babylon. And Nebuchadnezzar gave the kingdom to Zedekiah, the uncle of Jehoiakim. But Zedekiah was a bad man, and he rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. So Nebuchadnezzar sent an army against him, and took him prisoner, and put out his eyes, and brought him to Babylon. And he broke to pieces the beautiful brass pillars of the temple, and the great brazen sea, and carried away all the golden ornaments into Babylon.

So the kingdom of Judah lasted one hundred and fifty years longer than the kingdom of Israel.

Now, while the Jews were in Babylon, several of them were brought to the king, so that they might learn the wisdom of the Chaldeans. And their names were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. And Daniel was a prophet.

One night the king dreamed a strange dream, and when he awoke he forgot it. Then he called all the wise men of the Chaldeans, and asked them to tell him the dream, and they could not. Then the king was angry, and ordered all the wise men to be killed.

But Daniel went to the king, and said that he would ask God to tell him the dream and what it meant. So Daniel went home and asked his three friends to pray to God for him.

And in the night time God told Daniel the dream and

its meaning. And the dream was this. The king dreamed that he saw a great image with a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and sides of brass, thighs of iron, and feet partly iron and partly clay. And there came a stone cut out without hands, which fell upon the feet of the image and broke them to pieces, and the image was crushed by the stone and blown away by the wind. And the stone grew and became a great mountain which filled the earth.

Then Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar the meaning of the dream. The image signified four kingdoms. Nebuchadnezzar himself was the head of gold, and the rest of the image, the silver, and brass, and the iron, were three other kingdoms. And the stone which broke the image and filled the earth, signified another kingdom which God should raise up, and which should rule over all the world.

Then the king made Daniel a great man, and set him over all the provinces of Babylon. And Daniel asked the king, and he raised Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, to power, and gave them other names, and called them Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

Now, after a time, the king set up a great golden image, ninety feet high, and sent his messengers to gather all the people together, to tell them to come and worship the image. And the king said that when all the instruments sounded, the people were to fall down and worship the image, and that any one who did not do so should be thrown into a fiery furnace.

Now, because Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego believed in God, they would not worship the image. And when it was told the king, he was very angry, and ordered the furnace to be heated seven times more, and sent his men to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to throw them

into the fiery furnace. And they did so, and the furnace was so hot, that it killed those who threw the three men into it.

And as soon as this was done, the king rose up in great fear, for he saw the three men walking loose in the furnace, and with them was one who looked like the Son of God. And he cried out in fear, and called to them to come out of the furnace. And they did so, and they were not hurt by the fire, for God preserved them because they had obeyed His laws, and would not worship an idol.

After this, Nebuchadnezzar had another dream. He dreamed that he saw a great tree, which spread its branches to heaven, and covered the earth. And a holy one came down from heaven, and cried out that the tree should be hewn down and the branches cut off, but that the stump should be left in the ground, and bound with iron and brass. And the heart of the tree was to be changed to a beast's heart, and until seven times had passed over.

Then Nebuchadnezzar asked Daniel the meaning of the dream. And Daniel told him that he himself was signified by the tree, and that God would drive him from his kingdom, and make him like a beast until seven years had passed, so that he might know that the Lord was God.

And twelve months afterwards, as king Nebuchadnezzar was walking in his palace, and thinking how great and powerful he was, the word of God was fulfilled, and he was driven from men, and he lived in the fields, and ate grass like the beasts for seven years. And after seven years had passed, God restored him to his reason, and brought him back to his throne, and he praised God, and reigned wisely afterwards.

CHAPTER XLV.

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN.

Now there came another king after Nebuchadnezzar, called Belshazzar. And he made a great feast, and drank out of the cups and vessels which had been taken from the temple. And while they were feasting, there came a man's hand, and wrote upon the wall, and none of the wise men could read the writing. Then Belshazzar sent for Daniel. And Daniel read the writing, and told the king that his days were numbered, and that his kingdom was given to the Medes and Persians. And on the same night, Darius, the king of Persia, attacked Babylon, and killed Belshazzar and took his kingdom.

Now, Darius knew that Daniel was very wise, and he made him the first man in the kingdom. And some of the other rulers were jealous of Daniel, and they persuaded the king to make a decree that no one should ask anything of God or man for thirty days, except of the king himself, and whoever did so should be thrown into the den of lions.

Then they set a watch upon Daniel because they knew that he would not cease from praying to God. And when they told the king he was very sorry, but he would not alter the decree, because the laws of the Medes and Persians could not be changed. And Daniel was thrown into the lions' den, and the king sealed the den with his own seal, and went away sorrowful, because he thought that Daniel would be killed by the lions. And early in the morning he went again to the lions' den, and called to Daniel. And Daniel answered Darius out of the den of lions, and told him that

God had sent His angel who had shut the mouth of the lions, and had not allowed them to hurt him. Then the king was very glad, and ordered Daniel to be taken out of the den. And he sent for those men who had accused Daniel, and ordered them to be thrown into the den of lions, and the lions fell upon them and devoured them as soon as they touched the bottom of the den.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE RESTORATION.

Now after some years, Cyrus the Persian came against Babylon and took it, and reigned over the country. And God put it into the mind of Cyrus to let the Jews return to their own land. And he gave them back the sacred vessels, and sent them to their own country. And Zerubbabel, who was chief over them, gathered them together, and they restored the temple of the Lord, and built again the altar, and offered sacrifice upon it.

And the enemies of the Lord tried to hinder the work, and wished to kill the builders. So Nehemiah the scribe appointed half the people to keep watch, and to hold the spears and shields, and bows and arrows, while the other half worked at the walls. And all those who worked had their swords girded on their thighs, and with one hand the labourer held the trowel, and in the other hand he held a weapon. So their enemies were not able to surprise them, and the temple was built again, and the walls of Jerusalem were restored, and the Jews were brought back into their own land.

Then Ezra the scribe called the people together to a wide place near the water-gate, and stood upon a wooden platform, and brought out the Law which Moses had written. And he read the Law to them day by day, explaining it as he read, so that the people heard the whole of the Law which they had forgotten, and understood its meaning.

And the rulers of the people restored the feasts and fasts appointed by the Law, and the priests and Levites were set in their order about the temple, and the sabbaths were again observed as God had commanded. And God was again worshipped in the temple, and sacrifices were offered on the altar until the time when Jerusalem was destroyed, after Jesus Christ had ascended into heaven.

THE END.

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